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THE TATLER

XMAS No



THE INDIAN DANCER

By EDWARD SEAGO



By J. S. GOODALL

THE SQUIB

By
BEN TRAVERS

Illustrated by Hailstone

THAT LEVIATHAN, a play in three acts by Reginald Bumsted, was produced during the summer of 1938, and disenjoyed a run of five performances. Its failure was attributed by the management to the heat-wave, faults of production, slowness of action on the part of the principals, a dry-up on the first night, counter-attractions on stage, screen and air, the Press, the condition of the stock markets, the indisposition of a rather distant relative of the Royal Family, the rumoured possibility of a coal strike in the forthcoming autumn, and Herr Hitler.

Its failure was attributed by Mrs. Bumsted to Mr. Bumsted. "You should," she said, "have been firmer with the producer over the alterations he made in the script, and with the manager. And those actors. If it had been my play, nobody would have told *me* what to do with it."

Here she was probably wrong, but nobody could argue with Mrs. Bumsted, least of all Mr. Bumsted. For one thing, she kept him. She was one of those possessive women who have enough money to own a flat in Richmond, where they allow little husbands to live with them and indulge in mild literary endeavour. In appearance she was not unlike a plucked fowl. At this time she was forty-two, being two years older than Reginald and two inches taller. By an almost incredible misnomer she had received the Christian name of Rosie. Rosie Bumsted. She had no young: and quite right, too. There are far too many ugly people in the world as it is.

So the disappointment of Rosie, who had bought an expensive lilac dress for the first night, took an aggressive and irritable form; but she was that sort of wife. Many a less provocative woman has finished in a trunk. But this solution did not occur to Reginald. He merely withdrew and nursed his grief in privacy as far as was possible. Poor little fellow, the flop hit him very hard. None of his former seven plays had achieved any success beyond that of serving to keep out the draught on an agent's window-sill. Indeed, his sole achievements hitherto had been to publish two or three very feeble short stories and to secure the ready acceptance of his name and subscriptions as a member of the Incorporated Society of Authors.

But oh! the wondrous change which *That Leviathan* was going to create. For weeks ahead he had been

*He'd started. After
ten years . . . he'd
lied to Rosie.*



rehearsing the modest speech with which to acknowledge the ecstasies of a first-night audience, in the midst of which several well-known society ladies were expected to rise and wave their handkerchiefs. Pathetic! Nay, so unbridled was his optimism that he visualised the dramatic critics themselves swept into open applause. Pitiful! He even secretly hinted to himself that it might be found expedient to produce *That Leviathan* simultaneously at a second West End theatre with a duplicate cast, in order to cope with the insistent calls on the perspiring libraries.

It rather surprised Rosie to discern that, when the catastrophe happened, the thing that seemed to worry Reggie most was its financial side. He had naturally expected to amass a small fortune, but why should his failure to do so drive him into a condition of furtive despair? She tackled him about it.

"You're just as well off as you were before—better, in fact. Have you debts?"

"No, dear."

"Then why all this head-shaking and deep-breathing over the money you might have made? You haven't done so badly, if you ask me. You got your advance of two hundred pounds—less, of course, ten per cent. to the agent, which seems an outrageous amount. However, a hundred and eighty pounds—not to be sneezed at." She sniffed, and added: "Especially for a play which only ran five nights."

Not even at this did Reggie purchase a trunk for Rosie. On the contrary, he retired into a silent state of cogitative funk overshadowing his disappointment at the flop. Oh, if Rosie knew the truth about that one hundred and eighty pounds! Oh, if, as was more than likely, she decided to keep track of it! She would discover that, by the second week of rehearsals, a whole fat one hundred of it had gone west. And to whom? And then—oh!

He wished now he had been more reticent at the start, but Rosie was naturally inquisitive, and he, in his first enthusiasm, informative. He had returned from the first rehearsal slightly chastened by his experience. The company had read the play through—not very intelligently, it must be confessed. Still, the leading man and woman had both shown that they were giving it very serious thought, for they had brooded over their parts in a very earnest manner, and had suggested paraphrasing most of their lines. The small-part players weren't very bright. But old Miss Eve Smollett was going to be very good as the Aunt, and Ella Tappett showed considerable promise as Ruth.

"Who?" asked Rosie sharply.

"Ella Tappett, dear."

"Never heard of her. Why do you pick on her?"

"I didn't, dear."

"You did. You said she was good. She doesn't sound very good. Ella Tappett, indeed! What a name!" said Rosie Bumsted.

"And then, as the Uncle, there's a man called George—"

"Is she attractive?"

"Who, dear? Oh, Ella Tappett? No, I wouldn't say that."

"Then why on earth not? It's perfectly hopeless for a girl to take the part of Ruth unless she's attractive."

"Yes, but—well—she may—make up all right," said Reggie feebly.

He'd started. After ten years of submissive, spaniel-eyed probity, he'd lied to Rosie. And about a girl. Somewhere beneath all the horror and menace of the

situation he was conscious of a tiny glow of pleasurable excitement. To be suddenly whirled, at his age, into the seductive atmosphere of the theatre and confronted with a girl like Ella was, after all, a justifiable thrill. His mind dwelt on her between rehearsals: his eyes during them. He didn't mention Ella to Rosie again for a week—a fact which did not pass unnoticed, though Rosie issued no challenge.

But, unfortunately, Reggie had doubly lied. He lied to Rosie in saying Ella was unattractive. She was attractive. He also lied to himself in saying Ella was good in the part of Ruth. Ella was awful as Ruth.

He soon found this out without being told; but he was frequently told by Mr. Gerald Pugsley, the producer. Not openly or to any great length, because Reggie was tolerated rather than consulted at rehearsals. But while Ella was on the stage in the course of assassinating Ruth, and Gerald Pugsley happened to be anywhere near Reggie, he would lean abruptly towards Reggie and shield his mouth with his hand and say very audibly: "Awful!" And Reggie, still yearning with admiration for Ella, even in the midst of Ruth's assassination, tried once or twice to side-track Ella into the wings for a little private instruction in Ruth; but this appeared only to bewilder her. Besides, what was the use? Because Reggie's reading was by no means Gerald Pugsley's reading; and when Ella

turned from assassinating Gerald Pugsley's Ruth to assassinating Reggie's Ruth, the result was that Gerald Pugsley sent for Mr. Baumfelder, the manager.

Mr. Baumfelder appeared on the scene accompanied by a Pressman, a yes-man, and an anxious financier. There ensued a brief but terrific conference on the side of the stage.

Hands flew about in such an abandon of frenzied gesticulation that it was impossible to get very near the conference and, in any case, Reggie was not invited to do so. He guessed what they were up to, and was not surprised, a few minutes later, to discover Ella somewhere off back-stage, seated upon an open ironwork staircase, with eye-black on her cheekbones.

Some girls have the rather exasperating habit of receiving sympathy in distress with an averted stare, tight lips and dumb spasms of head-shaking. But her hand rested on Reggie's to denote her appreciation and to prevent any likelihood of his going away. At last he managed to remove her to a neighbouring restaurant and coaxed her with coffee into conversation.



"What!" said Ella. "Good heavens, no! The idea! . . ."

"It isn't that I mind losing the rotten part," she said. "Oh, I don't mean that. It's a lovely part, and my first chance in the West End. But what I mean is, I was counting on it, you see: and it's frightfully serious for me."

"Counting on it? What for?"

"Oh, I can't tell you that. But I've no people or anything, and no one to turn to and no private means or anything; and this was my first job for a long time, so, you see—but I mustn't tell you that sort of thing. Still, I expect you know what I mean."

"Yes, I think I—do," said Reggie in a hollow voice.

"It's this," said Ella, in case he didn't. "When I got this piffling part—I mean this lovely offer—I knew I could count on a long run, so I let myself go a bit. I owed a good deal before that, but I knew I could get that all back and also all the extra that I owed through letting myself go. So now I'm absolutely sunk. Not that I want to talk about it to you."

Reggie stole a glance at her through the full-moon spectacles he habitually wore. He sighed, scratched his ear, sighed again, retook her hand, and burred something.

"What!" said Ella. "Good heavens, no. The idea! As if I'd let you help me. That is, I didn't hear quite clearly what you said, but if it's what I think, good gracious, no. I simply couldn't. You don't suspect that's why I told you, do you? I only told you because you're such a wonderful friend. I've never known anyone so kind. Of course, it would only be for a time."

It promised to be for a pretty considerable time, because a year later Ella had retired from the pages of the *Spotlight*, and was working in an Ornate Leather Goods and Fancy Gadget Shoppe in South Molton Street at a fixed salary of thirty-five shillings per week. Reggie didn't know this. He didn't even know her home address. The friendship, wonderful as she had pronounced it to be, had failed to materialise.

But there were consolations. Rosie never bothered her head about what he was doing or intended to do with the one-eighty. She treated the subject with an air of patronising amusement, like that of a governess whose small charge has been given sixpence. Secondly, Reggie himself did not regret the loss. It gave him rather a kick to have purchased one hundred pounds' worth of guilty secret—a novel and elating experience, especially as conscience was on his side. It must be dreadful to be one of those husbands whose hidden guilts are dire and reprehensible. But, in this case, with the immediate and instantaneous disappearance of the friendship along with the hundred pounds, not even Rosie could accuse him of more than very misguided charity, if she found out about it. In his bolder moments, he even contemplated telling her: and one night he dreamed that he did so and that Rosie not only forgave him, but praised him with tears for a Christian action. But he awoke, sweating with relief to find it was only a dream, and decided to keep it even darker than before. Dreams go by opposites, they say.

Besides, it would be a mistake to upset Rosie just now, because she was inclined to be particularly gracious. It was now the summer of 1939, and at this period Richard Bumsted, cousin of Reggie, blew into her ken on leave from the Far East. Reggie had received his first visit with apprehensive side-glances at Rosie; but Rosie took to him immediately, and encouraged him with the archness of the maturely susceptible. Richard's stock of amusements would appear to have been limited, for he was a frequent visitor to the flat.

(Continued on page 15)



Schtench . . . stood before Rosie, monstrous and very alarming.



GULLIVER'S VISION OF THE LILLIPUTIANS.

DRAWN BY G. L. STUDDY.



He was speaking out of the side of his mouth and his right hand was inside the left shoulder of his coat

YOUR LONDON POLICEMEN AIN'T SO HOT

By JOHN KENT

just driven me to the Illinois-Wisconsin boundary line and then set me down and said:

"Get a load of this, Limey. I'd 'a bumped you if I'd thought you was worth it. But as it is, you can get to hell out of here, and you don't have to come back even for your hat."

ALTHOUGH I worked out every detail myself, I'll admit it wasn't what the writing people call "the perfect crime." I had one or two breaks. And although I'm smart, I'm modest.

To start with, I had the great advantage of ten months' experience in Chicago. Me, I'm a Londoner born and bred: I only tried to horn in there when Scotland Yard seemed

to be getting a shade too interested in me. But although that trip ended in disaster, as I'll tell you, it gave me a fresh slant on the London police when I got home again. You can't play hide and seek with Police-Captain John D. Murphy of the Chicago Police Department for ten months, and then come back and take the London flatties seriously

Why, our local sleuth at Blankton, Detective-Sergeant Turnop of the C.I.D., is that stupid you'd think even the other cops would notice it. He tried to pin a confidence-trick charge on me the time Mr. Orby Van Hensick lost his wallet with three hundred quid in it. He might have known Mr. Van Hensick couldn't afford to be laughed at, which made it kind of difficult for the police to get evidence. So all Sergeant Turnop could do was to give me a dirty look and say:

"Listen, Limey" (the name had stuck), "if you think you're going to pull any of your Chicago tricks in London, you're going to be unlucky."

That's what I mean when I say I'm smart.

Anyhow, it wasn't even Police-Captain Murphy who eventually ran me out of Chicago. It was that double-crossing love-child, Mario (Lugs) Luigi. Luigi, the big shot who crossed up so many of his own gang that half of 'em finished in the morgue, and the other half parked 'emself in Leavenworth just to feel safe for a while.

I suppose there were plenty of citizens gunning for Luigi when I left him in the States some eight years ago. That was when Chicago was living—and dying—up to its reputation. He'd



Then, while I was standing there wondering if I'd walk backwards or dive behind the nearest cover, Red Baker, a crazy little runt who was Luigi's side-kicker, stepped out of the car and socked me on the jaw

He was speaking out of the side of his mouth, and his right hand was inside the left shoulder of his coat. I wondered if I'd ask him about my share in the pay-off for the United Farmers' Bank stick-up. But I had another look at him and decided against it. I decided I didn't even want my hat.

Then, while I was standing there wondering if I'd walk away backwards or dive behind the nearest cover, Red Baker, a crazy little runt who was Luigi's side-kicker, stepped out of the car and socked me on the jaw, just on account of he'd wanted to sock me ever since I'd joined up with the gang, he explained. And he added that I'd got him to thank for Luigi's clearing me out that way.

Luigi said: "Skip it, Red," and they both climbed back in the car and drove off, which relieved me of a very embarrassing situation. But I vowed then that I'd get both of them sooner or later, and I kept thinking about that vow for eight years.

Of course, back in England, I heard of them from time to time. It seems that shortly after I resigned, Red took a ten-to-twenty-year rap for a shooting near The Rex on South State Street, on evidence kindly supplied by Lugs Luigi. So by and large, Luigi must have cleaned up very nicely on that bank stick-up, what with me and Red safely out the way.

Then Red got himself a gubernatorial pardon and started out after Luigi. And because of his methods, Luigi hadn't got many friends left, so he packed up and Chicago knew him no more.

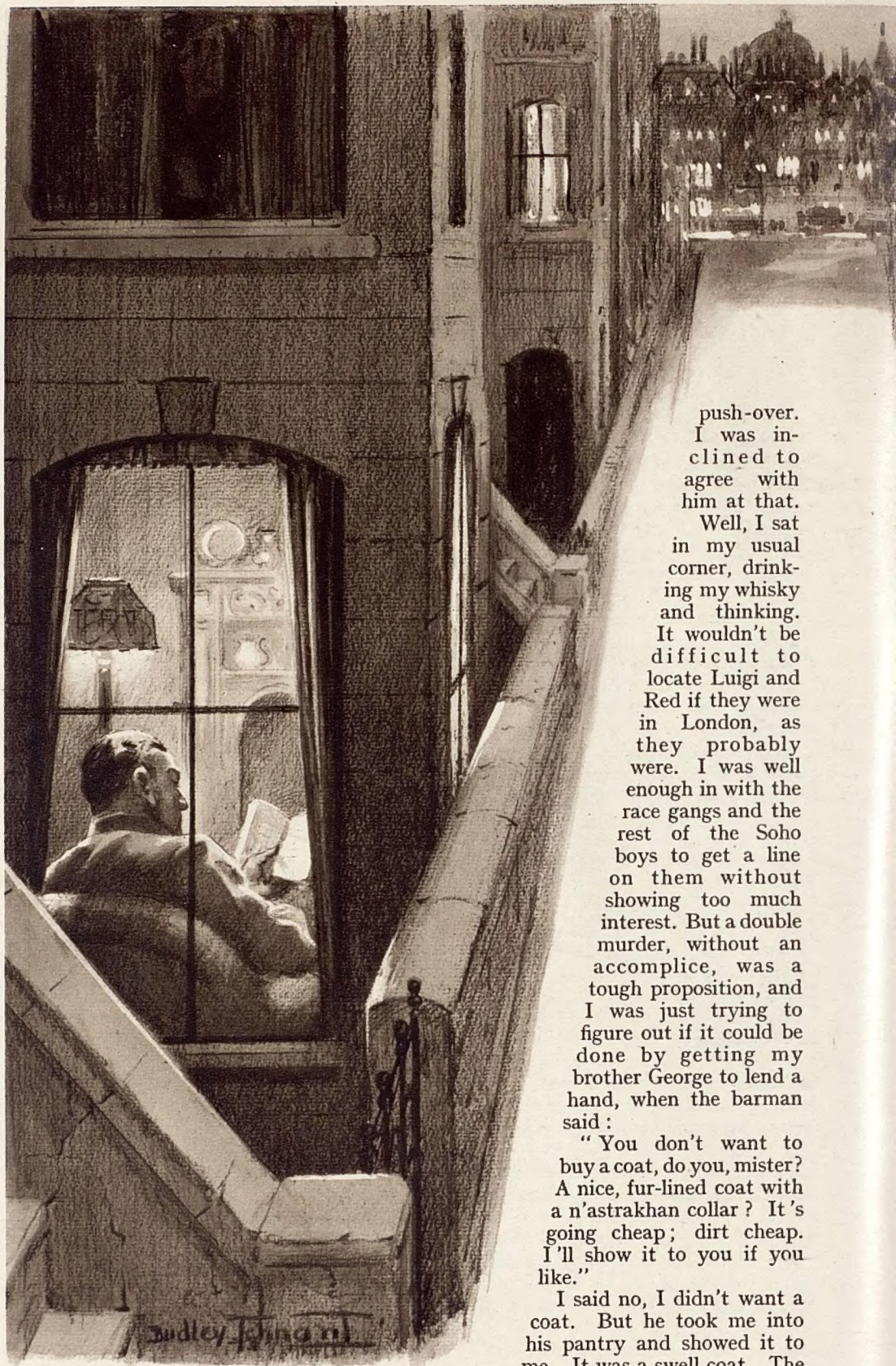
And that was the situation the night I went into the Crown and Anchor public house in Soho, London, for my usual night-cap before returning to my rooms in Brixton.

The barman, who knew me, greeted me cheerfully.

"Seen the *Evening Mail* to-night?" he asked. "Ever hear of this 'ere Lugs Luigi while you was in Chicago?" And he showed me the paper.

They'd given Luigi a splash right across the front page, the same as they did for the late Legs Diamond when he tried to land here. I suppose there wasn't much news; it was one of those evenings between European crises when retired Colonels wrote to the papers about rabbit trapping in Devonshire and got banner headlines for it. Anyhow, I read: "WELL-KNOWN GANGSTER BELIEVED TO BE IN LONDON—MARIO (LUGS) LUIGI SAID TO HAVE LANDED THREE DAYS AGO."

I handed the paper back and said, yes, I'd heard of him. But I was thinking, Red Baker would probably be trailing Luigi still, for Red had a single-track mind and a profound contempt for the English police: he'd often said that a murder in London would be a



push-over. I was inclined to agree with him at that.

Well, I sat in my usual corner, drinking my whisky and thinking. It wouldn't be difficult to locate Luigi and Red if they were in London, as they probably were. I was well enough in with the race gangs and the rest of the Soho boys to get a line on them without showing too much interest. But a double murder, without an accomplice, was a tough proposition, and I was just trying to figure out if it could be done by getting my brother George to lend a hand, when the barman said:

"You don't want to buy a coat, do you, mister? A nice, fur-lined coat with a n'astrakhan collar? It's going cheap; dirt cheap. I'll show it to you if you like."

I said no, I didn't want a coat. But he took me into his pantry and showed it to me. It was a swell coat. The kind of coat that takes my

sort of figure to do it justice.

"How much?" I asked.

"Eight quid," he says. "It's worth eighteen."

As a matter of fact it was worth more than that. If he'd known the first thing about fur he'd have asked at least twenty. I offered him two pounds and eventually got it for four. Four quid for a coat that's worth forty was smart work, but four quid for the idea that coat gave me was even better. For I'd no sooner seen it than I knew how I was going to get both Lugs Luigi and Red Baker and still leave the London police guessing. In fact, the more I considered it, the easier it was. Even my brother George, who's that dumb he's been a farmer

out in Essex all his life when he might have learnt quite a lot from me and made easy money the same as I have, couldn't go wrong on it. He needn't even know he was playing.

And when I went home that evening, wearing the coat, the railway policeman at Victoria Station and the booking-office clerk and the ticket collector all said "Good evening, sir." That's the kind of coat it was. And it all fitted in with my plan.

It wasn't difficult to locate Luigi or to contact Red. And it didn't take long to make Red understand I was ready to let bygones be bygones and, as far as Luigi was concerned, I was on Red's side. And within a week we were all boys together, except Luigi, who was hiding out in a small house in Makin Square in back of Bloomsbury. It was a nice, quiet square, which was all to the good.

Red told me his plan, which was so crazy as to make a smart guy like me almost cry. He'd got a pistol with a Maxim silencer which he toted round in a shoulder holster and produced just as though he was back in Chicago in the good old days. My only fear was that even a London policeman would notice it and run Red in and so spoil everything.

Well, Red and I got around together for a week or two and put in some good, steady drinking. Red could never hold his liquor anyway, and neat Scotch whisky got him fraternal at the third shot. And all the time I wore the coat, and the railway policeman and the booking clerk and the ticket collector all said "Good morning, sir," and "Good evening, sir," till I could have hugged myself.

And then, when everything was lined up, I took Red into the Crown and Anchor and started feeding him drinks. Then I got him talking about Luigi. And he said all

about Luigi and what he was going to do to Luigi, and at last he pulled out the gun, for he was plastered to the eyebrows and I'd been prompting him quietly.

If it had been anywhere else but Soho, the barman would have called a cop at once. As it was he said: "For Gawd's sake put that bloody thing away! D'you want us all to be pinched?" But I knew he'd remember the incident afterwards, when the police started checking up next day.

I apologised for my friend and said I'd get him home. And I took Red back to his rooms. He was back teeth awash by then, but just to be on the safe side, I gave him another couple of drinks and added a few knock-out drops to the last. Then I washed out my glass in which I'd put the drops, left my dabs on it (for those finger-prints would fit in with my story to the police) and hid Red's gloves where the police would be bound to find them.

I looked down at Red, peacefully sleeping on the bed. Next morning, when he woke up with a mouth like an Italian family moving, he'd only be able to say he'd slept right through the night, which would be a pretty thin alibi at best. So much for Red. I thought of that sock on the jaw and I refrained from kissing him good-night. Then I took his gun and, calling out to him cheerfully, walked downstairs and let myself out onto the street.

My brother George was waiting, as arranged, at the corner. He slipped into my fur coat and I pulled on Red's rain-coat which I'd brought away with me. Then George set out for Victoria Station where, wearing my fur coat, he would nod to the railway policeman, the booking clerk, and the ticket collector and then catch my usual train to Brixton, where he'd wait for me in my rooms. He didn't know what it was all about, which was just as well. He's that dumb, he might have had scruples. So far, everything was working according to plan. But that was mainly because the plan was so simple as to be almost perfect. Still, as I said at the start,

although I'm smart, I was certainly lucky in some things.

So, while my brother George headed south for Victoria, I headed north for Bloomsbury. There wasn't much risk of things going wrong now. Luigi had a ground-floor apartment and didn't keep a servant; I'd made sure of all that. But when I reached Makin Square, I found the set-up better than I'd dared hope. For Luigi was sitting in the window of his basement room, with the light on and the curtains open, reading a book. All I had to do was to rest the gun on the area railing and take a twelve-foot shot at Luigi before he looked up.



All I had to do was to rest the gun on the area railing and take a twelve-foot shot at Luigi before he looked up

Silencers vary, but this one was a honey. There was hardly a sound, and Luigi never had time to know what had hit him. And as soon as I'd assured myself that he was an entry for an inquest, I dropped the gun into the deep area, took off my gloves and walked quietly away. There was no one about, and when I'd shoved Red's rain-coat in a dust-bin about three blocks away, I worked round to the 'bus stop in Oxford Street and took a 'bus to Blankton.

I'd never gone down by bus before, and it seemed a long journey. Too long, although I had plenty to think about. I began to think of the funny way Luigi had jerked when that bullet took him just behind the right eye. And I thought of the mess it had made of the left side of his head, where it had come out. He'd turned in falling, and I'd had a good view. Then I tried to stop myself thinking about all that, and I ran over the details of the plan. It couldn't have gone off better: there hadn't been a hitch anywhere. And every clue was tied neatly on to Red. As for me, I had no alibi when the police started to question: I could only say I'd gone straight down from Red's room, where I'd left him awake, and caught my usual train to Blankton. They could check up on that and, of course, they'd question the station policeman, the booking-clerk, and the ticket-collector, and they'd find I had caught that train. And as for my brother George, he'd be back on his farm in Essex before the story broke. He'd go back to London by bus, of course, and it wouldn't matter if he was recognised at Fenchurch Street, which was his usual station for the North.

And my two accounts were settled. Red facing a murder rap and Luigi no doubt frizzling on a gridiron. It had been well worth waiting eight years. Then I got to thinking about Luigi again, and I didn't feel so smart. Not that I could detect a weak link in the story I'd built up, but just because of the expression on what was left of Luigi's face when I'd last seen it.

I was still thinking of Luigi when I opened the door of my room. Maybe that was why I felt so sick when Detective-Sergeant Turnop got up from my arm-chair and greeted me with: "I'd like a word with you, Limey."

George wasn't there, but there was a cop in uniform over by the window. And there was a nasty, triumphant look in the sergeant's eye. "What's—what's all this about?" I asked. But I knew.

"You know damn well what it's about," says the sergeant. And then I seemed to guess what that expression on Luigi's face had meant. And it didn't seem worth while bluffing any longer: I felt tired.

"O.K. sergeant," I said, dropping into the other chair, "I'll spill it. I shot Lugs Luigi. So what? Although how the hell you tumbled to it is more than I can guess."

The sergeant just glowered down at me and: "Hold on a minute," he said. "I've got to warn you that anything you say will be taken down and used as evidence against you." But I wasn't interested. I was trying to figure out where the plan had slipped up.

"Go ahead," I agreed. "Let that Rhapsody in Blue over by the window take it down, and I'll sign it." And I told 'em the whole story. And all the while I kept right along feeling how mighty smart I'd been and wondering where I'd fallen down.

And after it was read over to me and I'd signed it, the sergeant offered me a cigarette and said: "Thanks very much, Limey. As a matter of fact, I just looked in to enquire how you came into possession of that fur coat. It was stolen property, and we recognised it on your brother this evening. He said you'd lent it to him. But, of course, your story is even better. Ready to come along now?"

Which is why I'm sitting in this blasted cell.

Still, they tell me that to-morrow morning I can order whatever I like for breakfast, and that'll be something, anyway.

[THE END.]



J. Dixon-Scott, F.R.P.S.

A WINTER'S EVENING — BILTON VILLAGE, WARWICKSHIRE



PETROUCHKA

By EDWARD SEAGO



PRIMÆVAL TIMES



ROMAN TIMES



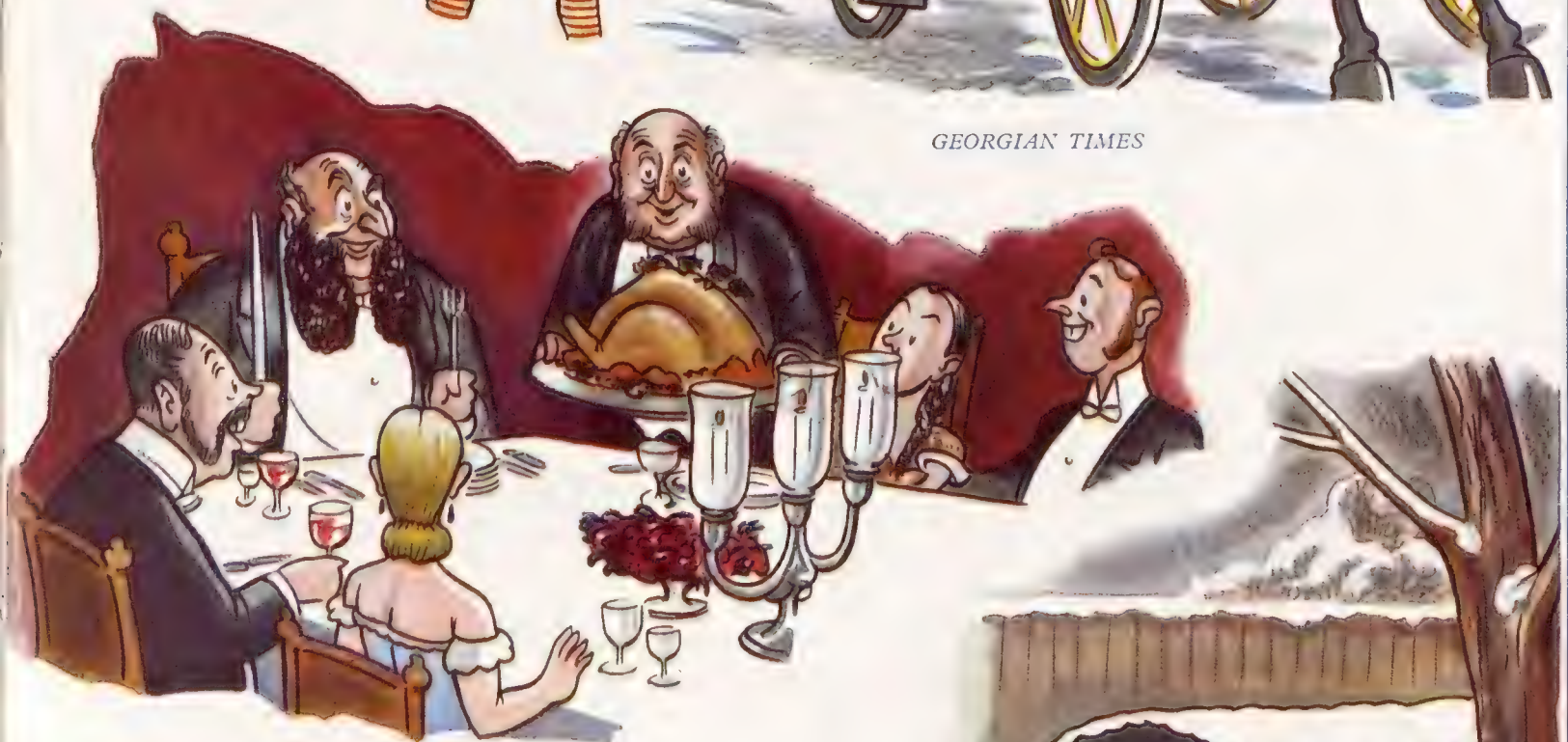
MEDIÆVAL TIMES

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

Drawn by



GEORGIAN TIMES



VICTORIAN TIMES

MODERN
TIMES



P. BELLEW.

DOWN THROUGH THE AGES

PATRICK BELLEW

THE THRILLER!



WHO DUN IT?

Drawn by C. Ambler

THE SQUIB.—(Continued from page 5.)

Then, one evening, Reggie, meditative in his sitting-room chair, was shot out of it as by a bomb exploded beneath. A diffident maid came and went. Ella stood before him, a combination of beauty and menace, like some visitant angel.

"You!" cried Reggie. "I never thought you'd come here."

"Nor did I."

"Well, what's up? Quickly, please. My wife's fortunately playing bridge at Mrs. Trebilway's; but—"

"Why? Don't you want your wife to meet me?"

"No. Not a bit."

"Why, what's the harm? You were very kind to me, and I've come to pay you back."

"In what way? You mean—to refund the loan?"

"Yes. I've had a bit of luck. At least, I suppose it's luck." She seated herself on the sofa. Her big eyes gazed into speculative space. She was apparently proposing to indulge in a prolonged reverie. Reggie made muscular movements of the back, as though irritated by his underwear, and glanced at the clock.

"Shall I tell you about it?" she asked.

"Yes. If it's not too long."

"I'll make it snappy. I chucked the stage and went in a shop. I've been there six months and I'm fed up. Anyhow, to cut a long story short, a few weeks ago a fellow came in and wanted to see some leather pocket-wallets with gold cornerings. He was a great big man with a full-blown bushy moustache and narrow eyes, but he wasn't a bad-looker, and after about five minutes it became pretty obvious that he was taking a lot more interest in me than he was in the leather pocket-wallets with gold cornerings."

"Oh, dear! Well?"

"Well, to cut a long story short, he dated me, and being fed up as I said, and also seeing through the window that he'd come in a Rolls-Bentley, and one thing and another, I said yes. And he did me jolly well—the Savoy and all that. Naturally, he tried to work the old 'Where do we go from here?' stuff, but I don't blame him for that—in fact, it's a bit of a compliment coming from a man in a Rolls-Bentley, don't you think so?"

"Oh, dear, I—it's all very—is it necessary to tell me all this? Because—well—yes?"

"I want you to help me decide," said Ella.

"Decide what?"

"Well, that's what I'm coming to. Give us a chance. Well, to cut a long story short, of course I said 'I'm not that sort of girl,' which I'm not, you know; at any rate, not the first time out. But, believe it or not, this only seemed to make him all the keener; and the third time out he said, failing the other, he'd marry me. Of course, he's been married before—that sort of man always has been, but he's apparently all clear at the moment. Well, I mean, I don't love him or anything like that,

but being fed up and everything, and he so well off and so on, well, I said yes. So I'm engaged to him. His name's Hugo Schtench. It's a pretty awful name, but, after all, a girl like me can't be too particular about a surname that comes out of a Rolls-Bentley, can she?"

"Yes, yes," said Reggie, still back-muscling and clock-observant. "So he's advanced you some money and you very dutifully thought you'd repay your debt to me? Thank you. That's settled, then. There's no reason for a very long talk. Where is it?"

Ella leant forward as if winding herself up for another chapter of autobiography about as brief and snappy as a Bach programme on the radio. Reggie promenaded despairingly at the window.

"You're right. He's given me two hundred pounds to buy my trousseau with, but he's had to go abroad for a week or two and when he comes back we're to be married. At least, that's the idea, but I haven't spent any of it, and I thought I might pay you back your hundred with a hundred of it and get married, or not get married and pay him only a hundred back, or pay him the two hundred back and not pay you the one hundred back and not get married. So what do you think?"

"Oh, good heavens! You must settle that for yourself and— and somewhere else."

"But I'm asking your help and advice."

"I don't know this Schtench. How can I decide?"

"Well, someone's got to decide," said Ella reprovingly.

She glanced quickly at the door. Reggie instinctively dodged

behind a chair. But it was only Richard.

"What-ho!" said Richard, who was the sort of jovial but somewhat ante-dated young Anglo-Oriental who still says "What-ho!" He saw Ella and his eyes widened.

"What-ho!" he repeated in another inflection which positively falsettoed on the "ho."

Reggie performed perfunctory introductions, after which he crossed the room and put his ear to the clock, as though incredulous that it was still in action. But Ella was having a good look at Richard, which was only fair, because he was having an even better look at Ella. Finally, she turned her eyes from Richard, performed some totally unnecessary business with the contents of her handbag, and murmured something about having to go.

"Oh, I say! Don't go on my account," said Richard. In fact, the other way about. What? Ha!"

"I must be getting back to the West End," said Ella. "Not that I've anything particular to do when I get there."

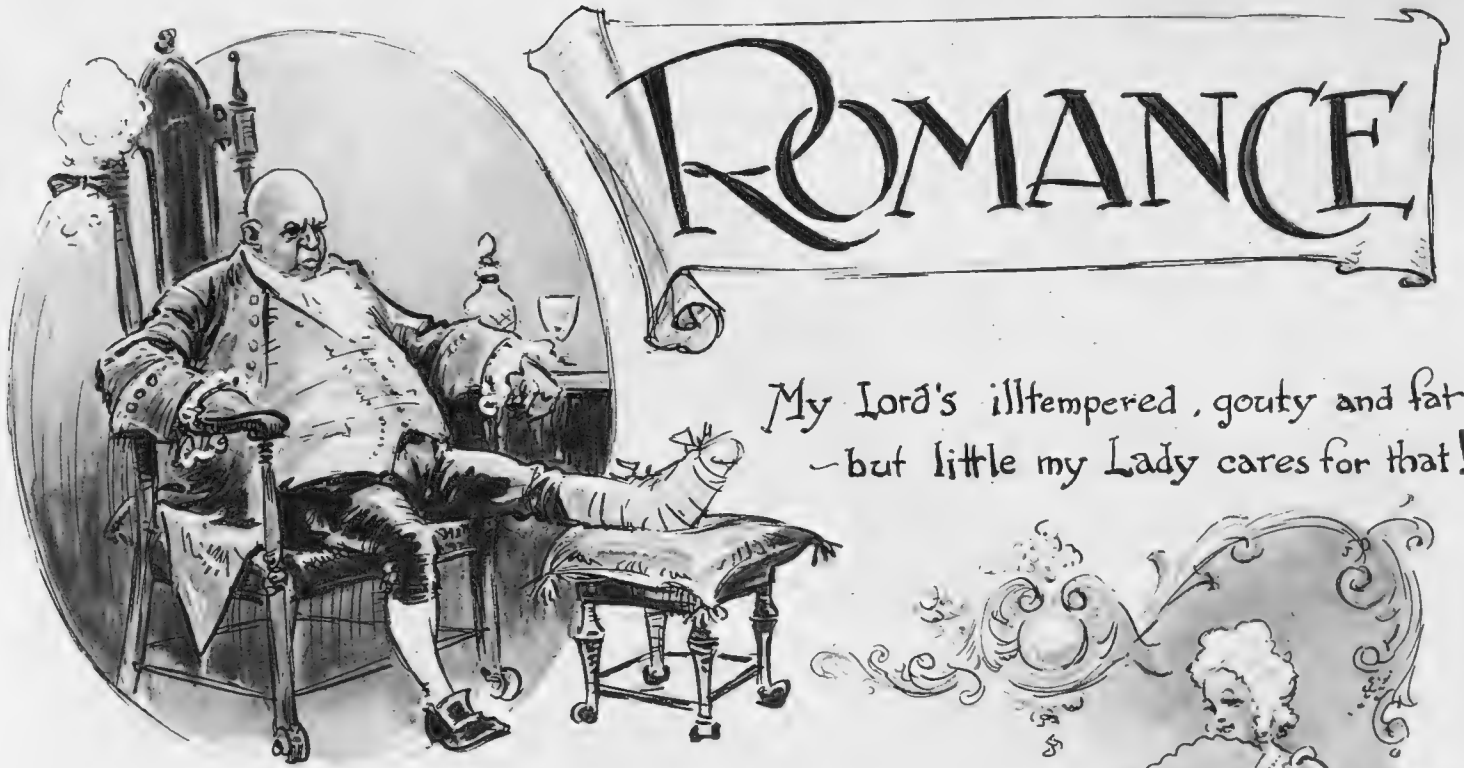
"Well, by gad, I'm not doing anything particular this evening either, by gad!" said Richard.

Mr. Hugo Schtench returned, still in the Rolls-Bentley, from his unknown business in the unspecified abroad, one evening a fortnight later. He disentangled his massive



THE GARDEN-LOVER

(Continued on page 18.)



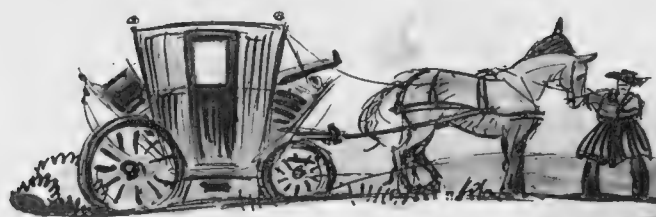
My Lord's illtempered, gouty and fat
—but little my Lady cares for that!

Those were the days of the gay gallant
Of powdered hair and minuet
Of dainty ruffle and stately dance
to tunes plucked out on
an old spinet.



A roving eye with a questing look,
An answering smile behind a fan,
which flickers and seems to answer "Yes"
to the age-old query of maid and man.





A swaying coach on the moonlit road.
A mounted man who bars the way
and bids the lady fair descend
and pay her toll with measure gay.



A word of love in a listening ear.
My Lady laughs behind her fan.
A tryst is made for a midnight hour
— A heart is left with a
highwayman. !



My Lord's ill-tempered, gouty, and fat.
—but, little my Lady cares
for that !

N.G.A.



Gmoler.

THE SQUIB.—(Continued from page 15.)

frame from the driver's seat and entered his spacious flat. A thick man. His chest was thick; so were his nose, his moustache, and his speech. So, if he were crossed, was liable to be the ear of his antagonist. Thick Schtench.

"Good evening, sir," said his manservant. "Welcome home."

"Ow, to hell with that! Miss Tappett been in?"

"No, sir."

"Why not? I wired 'er."

"You expected her here, sir?"

"Yes. What d'you think I wired her for? Ring 'er."

Ringling only brought the inexorable "B-r-r-r-b-r-r-r" of the deserted other end.

"Damnation!" said Schtench.

In this ungracious mood he proceeded to the address in Holland Park, where Ella rented her modest combined bed-bath-and-sit. Ella herself, from a bus travelling in the opposite direction, espied him as he fled by; so she got out of the bus and retraced her tracks. In her handbag was his original cheque for two hundred pounds, in a rather molested but still virginal condition. She had been, in fact, on her way to effect the hazardous business of giving the air to Schtench.

Arriving at the bed-bath-and-sit. home, Schtench confronted a cowed skivvy and cowed her seven times more than she was wont to be cowed, thus obtaining access to Ella's room. Schtench entered, obsessed already by some indefinite suspicion and breathing audibly through his nose.

On the little centre table, propped prominently against the alarm-clock, was a note in an envelope. It was addressed to R. Bumsted, Esq. He seized it and rent it open.

DARLINGEST,—In case you call while I'm out. Hugo Schtench has wired me. He is coming back this evening. I am going to see the big stiff and hand him back his cheque. If this note is still here when I come in I will 'phone you. I am all yours now. Your Goo-Goo."

Schtench crushed the note in his fist and flung it aside. For some moments he ruminated with an expression which called for a back-ground of sinister staccato music, if not a distant rumble of thunder.

Then he caught sight of the telephone directory, snatched it up and whipped its pages. R. Bumsted, eh?

Here he was. The only R. Bumsted in the directory. 13, Dogswood Mans., Richmond. Then click! The door; and he shoved the directory aside and swung round to face Ella.

"What are you doing in my room?"

"That's a privilege reserved for Mr. Bumsted!" he retorted.

"So you've opened my note and read it?"

"You bet I did. 'Oo's Bumsted? What 'ave you bin up to with 'im?"

"Among other things, finding out about your marriages," replied Ella with commendable aggression. "Why didn't you tell me you'd been married three times? And only lived two months with the last one and six weeks with the second? I suppose that's what you were going to do with me. You Bluebeard!"

"I'll deal with this Bumsted! I'll teach 'im to nark in on my affairs! You see what 'e'll get!"

Her only reply was to hand him his cheque. He tore it into violent fragments, and threw them at her.

"Goo-Goo!" he roared. Next moment he was demolishing an already time-worn staircase. A brief and painful reunion of affianced persons.

Ella clasped her hands thankfully. It was all over and safely over, because, with all his threats, Hugo couldn't possibly do anything to dear Richard. For one thing, he had no idea where Richard was staying. Then, opening

in sudden apprehension, her eyes caught sight of the telephone directory, yawning in dislocation where Schtench had cast it aside. Good heavens! He had looked up "Bumsted, R.", and had located Reginald.

Oh, very awkward! Because, apart from the imminent physical risk to Reggie, the poor little man had no knowledge of her engagement to Richard. He had received Richard's first enthusiastic report of Ella, and had implored Richard, almost with tears, to keep Ella out of his life and very ken. This for fear of Rosie. Rosie would recall Ella's name, ferret out the story of the loan and visit Reggie with the most appalling accusations.

So now it was essential that Reggie be warned. But how warned? By 'phone? No. Because this fiendish Rosie might answer the 'phone herself. Richard might call and warn Reggie. But Richard had to be found, and time was precious. There was nothing else for it. She must go herself and contrive somehow to see Reggie alone.

She scribbled a note to Richard, somewhat diffuse in its poignant haste:

Hugo has discovered about R. Bumsted but thinks

R. Bumsted is Reginald and is livid and has gone to make an awful scene with Reginald by mistake so I am going to warn Reginald about the mistake made about R. Bumsted by Hugo so he can tell Hugo he isn't the R. Bumsted Hugo thinks but not to tell Hugo which R. Bumsted the real R. Bumsted is. All my love. Goo-Goo.

Once more good fortune willed that she should find Reggie alone. From his chair he, *The Times* cross-word puzzle and a pencil leapt in three different directions.

"Oh, Mr. Bumsted: there's been a dreadful mistake."

"Yes, there has," said Reggie firmly. "I told Richard most emphatically that you were to stay away. My wife, thank goodness, is attending a meeting of the Women's Self-Determination League at Mrs. Stunning-Fellows. But—"

"Listen. You know Hugo Schtench?"

"I do not, thank you."

"Well, you're going to, I'm afraid. Do listen."

[Continued on page 1.]



"What's yours, Cyril?"—"Milk shake."

"Yours, Claude?"—"Milk cocktail."

"Well, I think I'd better stick to plain milk as I'm driving."

Dewar's "White Label" WHISKY AN ENTERTAINMENT IN ITSELF



*"Why, gentlemen!
I must have guessed your thoughts!"*



A DREAM OF OLD CHINA

By A. J. HAMILTON

ILLUSTRATED BY E. OSMOND

So Chen was left to dream alone. Wherever he was—in the narrow twisting streets, the dirty little room, the steaming laundry—he had always before him a vision . . . cool hills . . . beautiful ivory faces

SIX o'clock and London hurrying homewards. Buses, tubes and trams scrambled and fought to snatch up the thousands of typists, shop assistants, bank clerks, shake and jostle them through crowded, stifling streets, and spill them out at Clapham Common and Peckham Rye, Hampstead Heath and Highgate—every corner of London and every suburb. Soon the city would be empty, and over the streets that had roared all day with the deafening voice of industry would settle a dim and dusky calm, and the ghosts of old London would seem to lurk in the shadows of the grey buildings and Dickens walk hand in hand with Micawber, Dombey and Uriah Heep.

The pavements were crowded with hurrying figures, frantic in their eagerness to break away from the office or desk that had held them all day. And already they were living in the future, the future of the next few hours, into which they were hurrying with the energy and vitality that filled them as they snatched greedily at a few hours respite, until another grey day sent them damp and shivering into the dreary streets and airless offices.

There was no room for the small black figure standing motionless on London Bridge, gazing dreamily at the boats as they slowly made their way down the river and out of sight. He had been there for over an hour, this dusty little

man, pushed and jostled by the crowd, but still he stood there, surely the only living creature in the world who was not hurrying madly towards something or someone—or still hurrying madly though there was nothing at the end but a lonely room, and a long grey evening.

A pert young miss, hedged round with spikey parcels, crushed heavily against him, bruising his arm.

"I beg your pardon," he said politely. "Bloody Chink!" muttered the elegant young lady, scorn in her insolent painted eyes.

Back to the river went the lean yellow face, the dull black eyes, the thin sharp body.

"Bloody Chink!" The words did not hurt; he had heard them so often that he had almost forgotten he had a name, and had long ceased to notice the contempt that the white man flings into the word "Chink!"

So Chen forgot the girl that had cursed him, and turned the gentlest face, and the kindest eyes in the world, back to the slow river; and there passed before him the slow, monotonous pictures of half a century.

And that was strange, for all his life, every minute of his sixty years, he had lived in the future—a future so shadowy at first that it had been no more than a hopeless dream; and now it was no longer a dream, for tomorrow he would step into the

future that had gleamed before him all his life—the dream that had kept his frail body alive.

So it was strange that Chen should now be living through the past, remembering all the pain, the bitterness and horror, remembering dispassionately, without resentment, as something that had been inevitable, but was now over, and could never touch him again.

He thought of the narrow, filthy streets, filled all day and all night with drunken beasts, screaming women, thieving ragged children. He thought of the tiny room, dirty and airless, which was the only home he had ever known; the stifling laundry where he had sweated for long hours in the wet heat, and he thought of Hutch, with his ugly face and twisted body, the only friend he had ever known. Hutch would have laughed scornfully at the word "friend," for his tongue was as bitter as his soul, and even Chen was spared none of the curses and abuse of the drunken cripple. They spoke little, but Chen tried in his gentle way to ease the pain of the tortured body, and he knew in his heart that Hutch cared for him as fiercely as he hated every other living creature.

It was to Hutch that he had first spoken, haltingly, of his wild dream, and Hutch had cursed him for a fool. Then he got drunk again, and shouted to the lumbering fellows

the narrow, twisting streets, the dirty little room, or the steaming laundry—he had always before him a vision—cool hills, tipped with gold, a smooth river, fragrant flowers. And everywhere about him beautiful ivory faces, like moonlit water, smiled gently. And most of all there was the cherry blossom. Endless rows of trees, thick with blossom, crowded into the picture, hiding the hills and the yellow faces, until soon there was nothing but cherry blossom, and the soft petals floated down in a shower before his eyes, made a carpet at his feet, and rested on his hands and shoulders.

Chen knew nothing of China. He had been born in Limehouse and lived there all his life; and all his life he had wanted one thing only—to go to the beautiful land that filled his waking and sleeping dreams. No one had told him that there were industrial towns in China; that the beautiful figures he had seen in his dreams wore bowler hats and lounge suits; that coolies sweated and strained to serve the white men, just as he sweated in the laundry. He had created a picture as fantastic and impossible as a Hollywood setting of the *Mikado*, and as the years passed it became more fanciful, and the cherry blossom fell thicker and faster, until he could feel the velvet petals brushing his cheeks and trembling through his fingers.

So Chen had starved and toiled, and every odd shilling he

(Continued on page 45)

around him:

"What do you think? My little Chink wants to go to China!"

The next day he remembered nothing, he only knew that the pain he had deadened for a few brief hours was fiercer than ever. But they remembered, those drunken brutes, and they had come to taunt Chen; and that was good sport, for the gentle little Chinaman was afraid of them, and cowered a little as they crowded round him, jeering and laughing. Then Hutch, who had started the trouble, stopped it one day with a boot flung at the head of one of the brutes, and such a blazing fire of hatred in his eyes that they had fallen back amazed. Any one of those coarse fellows could have knocked down Hutch, and broken his crippled body with one hand, but those blazing eyes had sent them away, and beneath their strong bodies and brutal minds they were afraid.

After that Hutch drank alone, and no one ever came to the little room on the corner; so Chen was left in peace. For a time they talked among themselves of the Chinaman who was mad, and the hunchback who was a devil; but they soon forgot about them, and found it better sport to beat their wives, starve their wild children, and cheat their neighbours.

So Chen was left to dream alone. Wherever he was—in



He told her of China and the great ship that would take him there



“We are now taking you over to the
Zoo to listen to noises at feeding time”

Drawn by HAILSTONE



"But he was here first!"

DRAWN BY H. H. HARRIS

THE FIXER- UPPER

By
ROBERT
WESTERBY



Harry Lemp was a problem to everyone but himself

MR. NOAKES came into the breakfast-room warily, trying to get to his chair before anyone should notice him. His newspaper, which for years had always been neatly folded at the side of his plate, was on the floor, rumpled and disordered.

Muttering angrily, and doing no more than glancing round at the other people in the room, Mr. Noakes stooped and picked up the paper as one might pick up a hurt child.

At the table, next to where he was standing, sat his wife's brother, Albert Wallison. Next to Albert was Mary Wallison, and across the table, facing this pair, sat Mrs. Noakes and the Noakes' boy, Jim.

Mr. Noakes refolded his paper carefully, and scowled at Albert.

"Hey, there, Noakey!" Albert said in his fruity voice. "Hey! Not so much rustlin' and noise! Rustlin' papers! What's the matter with the man?"

"I hate to see—" Mr. Noakes started bitterly.

"Dat evenin' sun go down' . . ." finished Albert, and guffawed to his wife. "Listen, Mary," he said, "Arthur's going to sing us a coon song now. I—"

"—someone who mishandles a newspaper and then throws it about the floor. Not necessary," Mr. Noakes said acidly.

"Oh, poof! What a fuss about nothing! Not much of a paper, anyway. Politically unsound," Albert said.

"Unsound! I'd have you know, Albert—"

"Now, sit down, dear, and have your coffee," Mrs. Noakes put in soothingly. "And I'll get you some bacon."

"Ach! Don't spoil the man, my dear," Mary Wallison said reprovingly. "Let him pour his own coffee. It's time he did something for himself, I always say; any man. Arthur's getting soft with all this being waited on."

Mr. Noakes breathed deeply and sat down behind the sheltering hedge of his newsprint. He had had enough of the Wallisons. He was a tolerant man, and they were his wife's relations. But enough was enough.

They had been staying with him for four weeks. When they had first written to ask if they might "come for a

few days," Mrs. Noakes had been pleased, and slightly flattered. In her family, Albert, the eldest, had been counted quite a sahib. He had said so himself, constantly, and in the absence of strong opposition, had come to be believed. And now he was home on leave

from some part of Africa, and had brought a romantic flavour with him; an aura of Travel, the Tropics, where men were Empire Builders when they were not Outposts, and wore topees or stengah-shiftahs or tiffins; and had Boys, Bearers, Hiyahs or Sundowners as the mood took them. It had seemed grand listening to Albert for the first week, and even Mr. Noakes, neatly dull and comfortable behind his retired respectability, had enjoyed it. But that had changed as Albert and Mary Wallison changed, and now it seemed they had been staying for months and would continue to stay for ever.

Albert's good-natured politeness of the first week changed subtly to condescension in the second, and to outright patronage in the third. Albert knew everything; argued down any opposition to his theories and beliefs; told Mr. Noakes exactly where he was wrong in everything he did, had done, or intended to do in the future. And Mary Wallison, a true chip off the same kind of blockhead, was just as helpful and worked at the Noakes' home in much the same way, though her approach was different. Social Distinctions, Dress, Looks, the Slackness of Servants were Mary Wallison's platform.

Mr. Noakes scowled as he remembered the first day Mary had strolled down the stairs running her fingers along the fluting of the banisters, and then walking triumphantly into the kitchen to show the housemaid the thin wisp of dust she had collected on her finger. House-Boys in Africa, it seemed, *really* worked at their duties. Less thought about the movies and about boy friends, and more thought about work, Mary said, would make things more comfortable for everyone.

"Don't read that blockheaded editorial, Noakey," Albert boomed suddenly. "Balderdash from start to finish! Man's a fool!"

Mr. Noakes rustled the paper and scowled again. The leader-writer of the paper was his hero. Every word the man wrote seemed inspired to him, so that for years he had read and nodded wisely over the editorial, feeling that here, if nowhere else, was a man of experience and sound

judgment. The leader-writer and Mr. Noakes held almost identical views on practically every subject.

"Oh, come on, now, Noakey!" Albert said again. "Have some grub and be sociable."

"I would be glad, Albert, if you would refrain——"

"From calling me 'Noakey'?" . . . finished Albert jovially. "That what you were going to say?"

"You know what I am going to say?" Mr. Noakes said coldly. "Do you, I wonder, know what I *think* sometimes?"

"Now, then, Arthur!" Mrs. Noakes said sharply. "Don't start quarrelling. There's no need to be rude, is there?"

Mr. Noakes fumed. "Rude? I? Why, you heard——"

"Never mind. Forget it. I bear no malice. Noakey's liver is out of order." Albert rose with dignity and strolled over to the window. "Like to play some golf to-day, Noakey?" he said magnanimously. "'Spose we might as well. Pity the course here is so poor. Strikes a very low note, you know. Scratchy."

"I should complain to the professional," Mr. Noakes said.

"Oh, I have. Surly brute of a man. No satisfaction there."

"There might be a better course somewhere else, perhaps," Mr. Noakes said acidly. "For the money, I should say that this course was adequate." He had paid Albert's fees for him ("Just a loan, old man"), and had not yet been repaid.

"Not as good as the little course in Salamiland," Albert said. "Rattlin' good little course that. Laid it out myself. Cleared literally acres of stuff to get it going. Amazing job."

"The people playing golf here look so odd, I always think," Mary said. "No *chic*, don't you agree, my dear?" she added to Mrs. Noakes. "Such bulges, and

such awful sweaters making everything seem worse. Very poor type of person; socially, I mean. I dare say they are quite charming in some ways, of course. But their clothes, my dear! I can't think what some people are about."

"Or why," Mr. Noakes added drily.

"Stop tattling, Mary," Albert said. "You're making Noakey peeved again. Think we'll go in the garden for a while. Must get *some* exercise. Bit fuggy in here. You ought to get more exercise, too, Noakey," he added. "Getting fat, old man; paunchy!"

Mr. Noakes went red. "How long does your leave last, Albert?" he asked with menace.

Albert pulled at his long upper lip and meditated. Mr. Noakes watched him, a tight, bitter irritation working hard at his nerves. Every gesture of the man; his red face and vacant blue eyes; his ginger moustache and sandy hair; the way he ate, smoked, talked, drank; it all infuriated him.

"Another four months now; all but three weeks," Albert said finally.

"All but two weeks," Mary corrected.

"Three weeks. Don't contradict."

"Two weeks."

Albert frowned majestically. "You must learn not to contradict. Makes a feller look ridiculous. I said three weeks and three weeks it is. You are forgetting that we stayed one week longer than we had planned—in Mombasa. *Now* argue!"

"But we didn't, Albert. We were going to, you remember, and then there was that mistake you made about the sailing dates——"

"Mistake! I . . . Stop this arguing! Arrhm!" Albert snapped.

Mary laughed nervously. "What a fuss about nothing," she murmured to young Jim Noakes. But the boy, who was fifteen and "dumb-insolent," as Albert had once remarked, gave her a flat stare and said nothing.

Albert gave a curt nod and transferred his attention to his host again. "Noakey," he said, "you ought not to



He alternately sucked his teeth, rattled the money in his pocket, hummed and whistled, and drummed his fingers on the table-top

drink coffee. Bad for the nerves. Your nerves are not so good, you know, old man. Strike a very low note."

Mr. Noakes stared fixedly at his paper. "My nerves are perfect usually, thank you, Albert," he said calmly. "And my general health is very good. In fact," he went on, scowling at the expression which irritated him more than any other Albert used, "in fact, I strike a very high note indeed."

"Rubbish, man! You want some setting-up! Why, look at me!"

"I prefer not to."

"Arthur! Really!" Mrs. Noakes said, in a horrified voice. "That's no way to talk to Albert. He meant it only in kindness."

"Just proves what I said," Albert said, grinning. "Bad liver. Now, put him in my place. Three years in Africa—up-country—flies, a spot of fever, heat. Why, the chap'd crumble; absolutely crumble away."

"Africa! Hey, boy! Bring me some tiffin. Where's my topee—gin-swizzle it!" murmured Jim Noakes softly.

Albert spun round angrily. "What's that, sir? You'd better keep a civil tongue in your head, boy."

"Who, sir? Me, sir?" the boy said. He looked at his father.

"You stay where you are, Jim. I'll talk to you about your behaviour in a minute," Mr. Noakes said.

"Bout time," Albert said. "Boy's out of hand. Don't know how to manage him."

"It's partly his mother's fault," Mary said severely. "She spoils him, too."

"If he were my boy, I'd soon lick him into shape. Never met a boy I couldn't handle yet. Never. And as for you, Noakey . . ."

"Don't call me . . ." Mr. Noakes started; but Albert laughed loudly, and suddenly pounced forward. With an upward sweep of his hand he banged Mr. Noakes's paper high into the air. "You see?" he said. "Look at you! You jumped nearly out of your skin. Dreadful! Your nerves are terrible, man! You want more exercise. You want to jerk up your liver a bit. Come on, Mary," he added to his wife. "Let's go into the garden and walk round a little. Arthur's in a peeve this morning—so we'll let him sulk. Surly devil. Play golf by myself."

The two Wallisons left the room together, or, rather, in procession. Albert always walked a pace ahead of anyone he happened to be with—like a bull leading a herd.

Rather anxiously, hoping to steer Mary away from the kitchen and any possible renewal of hostilities with the cook, Mrs. Noakes rose to follow them. She exchanged a stern look with her husband as she did so, and paused in the doorway. "Don't be so impolite to Albert," she said. "He means very well, and has high spirits, and he resents your snubbing him."

Mr. Noakes sat rigid. He was keeping his temper by an effort. His eyes, like grey glass, stared fixedly at the crumpled newspaper at his feet. He counted ten slowly to himself, and then another ten to make sure. Finally he sighed, and wiped his forehead.

"What are you going to do, father?" Jim said suddenly. "About the Pukka Sahib, or the Great White Burden, I mean. Uncle Albert?"

[Continued on page 55]

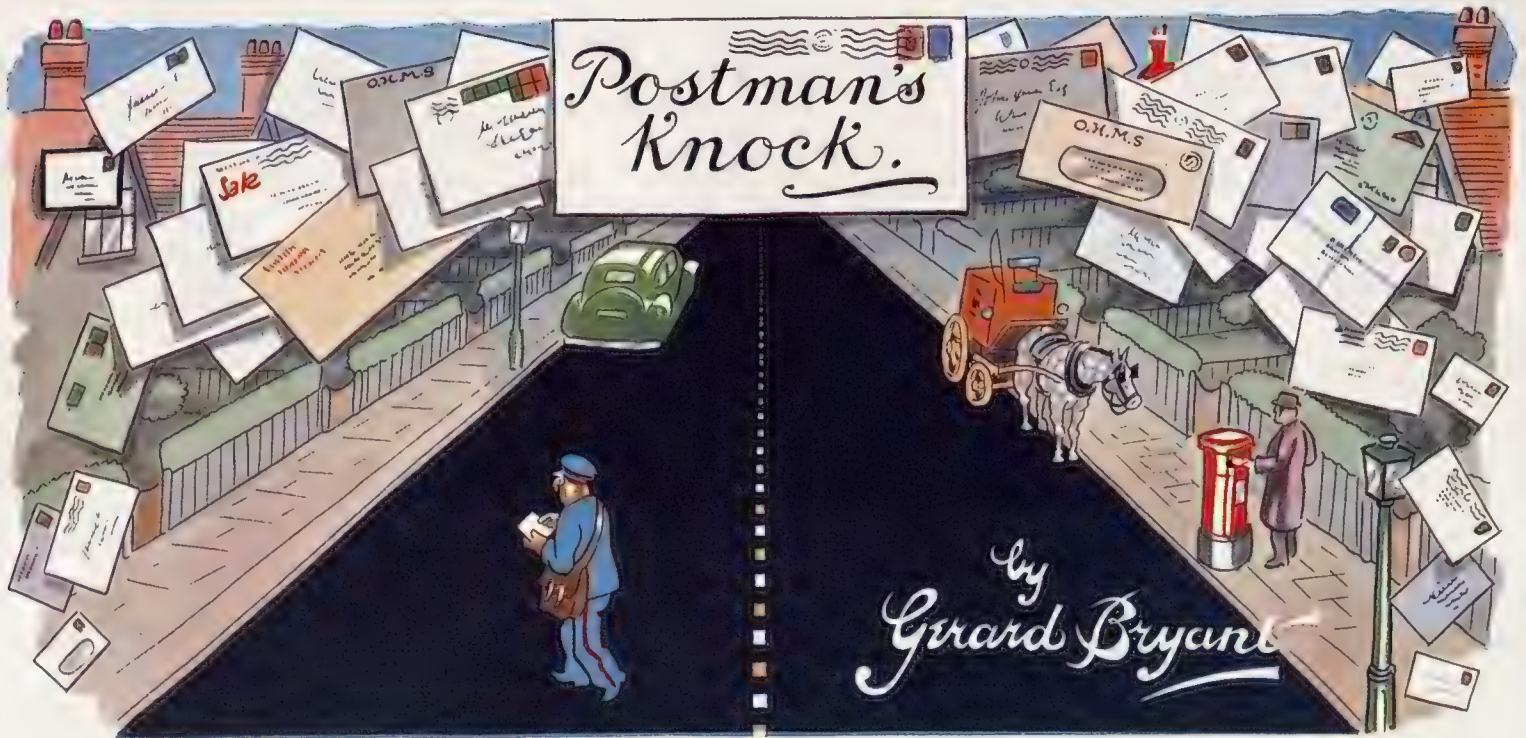


"Feel," Harry said, and put his large hands on Mary's bare back. "Ever feel such cold hands?"



Enjoy Wills's Gold Flake

The Cigarette with Personality



*A postman's life is not one that's exciting,
It's hard upon the temper and the feet,
For you soon find out that other people's writing
Is a puzzle that can often get you beat;
Their scrawling is appalling and they never dot their "i"s,
And how I ever sort 'em out's a permanent surprise:*

*Here's a bill for No. 20 that I've often see before,
And a further "Final Notice" for the family next door.
Here's pretty view of Hastings for the piece at 22,
And a buff O.H.M.S. which means that something's overdue.
And here's a scented envelope, a tasty shade of mauve,
Which goes to show that 30 is a dashing sort of cove. . . .
But here's the one that cheers me up and makes me want to cry,
It turns up every fortnight and the postmark is Shanghai.
She stands in the doorway, so eager and young,
And snatches it out of my hand;
Then she gives me a look I can read like a book—
A look which says: "You understand!"
And as I shove a circular through 19's letter-box,
I forget about my corns and all the other postman's knocks,
For I'm acting as a go-between, I'm Cupid's right-hand man,
And to bring two hearts together I'll do everything I can.*





*In many ways I find I envy most men
Who earn their living sitting at a desk,
For their arches haven't dropped like those of postmen—
And our uniform is far from picturesque.
The ovations of Alsations get more fright'ning every day,
And I wish they'd chain their bulldog up at 27a.*

*Here's a bill for No. 20 and it's time that it was paid;
I suppose these Z's and X's are for 15's foreign maid;
Here's a view of Windsor Castle for the glum old girl at 10,
And as for No. 22—well, hers are all from men.
Here's a couple of "Reminders" for the bloke at 28,
And I never trust that Sealyham, so 12 will have to wait. . . .
But here's a little parcel—please forgive me if I sing—
For I have a sort of notion that inside it there's a ring. . . .
She stands in the doorway, her face all lit up,
I hand it across with a smile,
Then she goes a bit pink and I've never, I think,
Seen a happier look on a dial.
And then she asks me in and says: "For what you've done for me
The least that I can offer you's a fag and cup of tea."
And when at last I leave her, building castles in the air,
I wouldn't change positions with a ruddy millionaire!*



— MALLETT —



THE WITNESS WHO
SPOKE UP

By H. M. BATEMAN



THE WITNESS WHO WOULD
RATHER NOT SAY

By H. M. BATEMAN



*HEN I was young we thought a hansom
dashing;
Nervous old ladies shivered at its speed,
And in mute protest sent umbrellas
crashing*

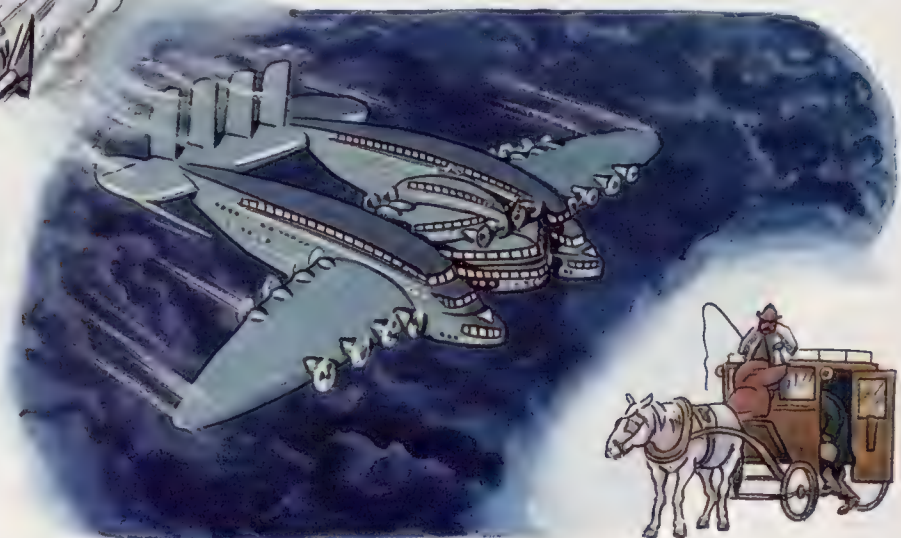
*Up through the trap when cabby whipped his steed.
Blonds drove their tandems, leaders gaily dancing
In manner worthy of the haute école;
Flash four-in-hands along the roads came prancing,
Filling with terror every timid soul.
Crossing the road was not a path of roses,
Dodging the sudden swoops of cyclists when
We wove a wary way 'neath horses' noses,
Ten miles an hour was not so dusty then.*



*Years of discretion came to find me speeding;
Cars had arrived to take the horse's place;
Juggernauts jazzed about the roads unheeding
Protests from poultry, pigs and populace.
Faster the pace became and ever faster,
Fouler became the petrol-scented air;
Crossing the road was but to court disaster,
Hooting of horns resounded everywhere.
Ghoulish and goggled motor cyclists madly
Flashed into view and vanished from the ken,
Leaving the startled hiker choking sadly.
Forty an hour was merely crawling then.*

*Age found me mastered by a loftier passion,
Soaring into the empyrean blue;
Cars ceased to thrill when flying came in fashion
Wafting weekenders off to Timbuktu.
Planes stunting low left lookers-on affrighted,
Or with their trailing "ads" defiled the sky;
Often at night our hopes of rest were blighted
By loud reverberations from on high.
Year after year the pace becomes more hectic,
Till the fell advent of some swifter craze
Drives us to seek Nirvana cataleptic
In some four-wheeler of Victorian days.*

R. B. VAN WART.





Gentlemen! *your* **Johnnie Walker —**

In the stately homes of England, Johnnie Walker is very much at home. In the most distinguished circles this fine whisky takes its place, as to the Manor born. For there is an aristocracy among Scotch whiskies. And only the very finest of them — *all* the very finest of them — mellowed and matured by time and blended with traditional skill, are assembled in every bottle of Johnnie Walker.





LORD ORFORD AND HIS STAGS AT THE

After the painting by L.J.

The attraction of domesticating, or trying to domesticate, wild animals seems to have been tried by apt to be treacherous pets. The driving of a team of red deer stags seems to have been the unique at exercise or out hunting, struck the line of his team and promptly went in pursuit in full cry, in were only saved by the promptness of the ostlers at the Ram Inn (now the



THE RAM INN, NEWMARKET—circa 1797-1800

ONEL EDWARDS, R.I

by many people throughout the ages. Red deer, although not difficult to tame if taken as calves, are the effort of a Lord Orford. It was nearly attended with disastrous results, as the local hounds, either in spite of the hunt servants' efforts. The deer, frightened by the noise, bolted into Newmarket, and the Rutland Arms Hotel), who managed to shut the doors against the pack



WHAT ABOUT A REST, I'M FREEZING

By LEO DOWD

The Gift of being well-groomed

BRYLCREEM

THE PERFECT HAIR DRESSING

TONIGHT they're dining at the Mayfair; then on to a theatre and dancing till the early hours. Tomorrow they're full up too—not an evening before Friday week. You see them everywhere, the man-about-town and his constant companion—Brylcreem. However long the night, Brylcreem keeps his hair immaculate. Christmas is a busy time for them both, and he can always do with an extra jar. The big bottle with the pump attachment makes an ideal gift.

In bottles and tubes **1/-**

Larger bottles **1'6 1'9 2'6**

Pumps to fit bottles . . . 2/-

At all Chemists and Hairdressers



County Perfumery Co. Ltd., North Circular Road, W. Twylford, N.W.10

THE FOND FAREWELL— MODERN STYLE

*My dear, let's say "Good-bye" again.
(I'm in a frightful daze!)
Just time for us to sigh again,
And go our different ways.*

*Some day, I know, we'll meet again.
But when, and where, and how?
And will you look as sweet again,
As pleasantly petite again,
As sweet as you do now?*

*And toss your golden curls again
With Attic grace and charm,
Shake out your dress in furls again,
And show your teeth like pearls again
To set my head in whirls again
And smilingly disarm?*

*And will you look so gay again
So young and vital still,
With eyes that plainly say again,
"I hope you'll step my way again!"
"Don't hesitate, I pray!" again,
And "If you wish, you may!" again?
Oh boy, I hope you will!*



GRACE
LODGE



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STOCKINGS**
*for gifting in the grand
manner!*

After the first rapture of string-cutting and parcel-plundering is over the charm of Christmas gifts oftentimes fades. You may insure against your gifts losing their allure by sending shoals of sheer, lovely Bear Brand stockings. Their individuality is so apparent, their loveliness lasts so long that they will still be winning kindly thoughts when Christmas is far past. Incidentally, they are so modestly priced that a really philanthropic gift list comes exceedingly light on your purse.



3/11 · 4/11 · 6/11 In fine Service Weight and Sheer Chiffon in each price.



THERE GOES OUR
CHRISTMAS DINNER

By WING-COMMANDER E. G. OAKLEY-BEUTTLER



HE WOULD!

"Signal from the First Lord, Sir,
Wishing us a Happy Christmas!"

By WING-COMMANDER E. G. OAKLEY-BEUTTLER

CRAVEN
"A"

Will not
affect your
throat

Currys Ltd. 150 years' reputation for quality

A DREAM OF OLD CHINA

(Continued from page 21)

could earn, and every penny he could save, had gone into the embroidered purse. And now, when he was an old man, there was enough in the purse to make the dream come true. The starved body was as frail as a little child's, and everyone said that Chen was mad, he had such strange fancies. But still he lived, and as he stood so still upon the bridge he gently fingered the crumpled notes that would take him across the seas to China; and then the cherry blossom began to float around him, for now it was never still, and the lean face lit up, and he almost laughed as he stretched out his hands to catch it, and press the fragrant petals to his lips.

"Well, you seem happy enough," said a voice at his elbow, and Chen turned to see a bold painted face and bright yellow hair beside him. He was surprised, for no one ever spoke to him, and at first he could think of nothing to say. Then his joy burst out, and he began to talk quickly and eagerly, twitching the nervous bony hands, as he told her of China, and the great ship that would take him there. His face was alight, and the girl looked at him curiously. "Mad," she thought; aloud she said:

"It sounds a swell place. Why not come and tell me more about it while we have some tea?"

So together they went down one side street, and then another, and stopped outside a small flat. Inside it was cheaply furnished, but moderately clean, and Chen had never seen such a pretty place. Perhaps his old eyes were obscured by the swiftly-

falling cherry blossom; perhaps he was seeing everything that day in a kind of rosy light, but he thought the cheap little face before him was beautiful. He did not see that the skin was coarse under the thick, white powder, the cheeks hard patches of unnatural red, the bright yellow hair as harsh and lifeless as wire. He only saw a soft pink face, as beautiful as the petals of his cherry blossom, and the hair was as golden as the sunlight on the hills.

She gave him tea in a little cup painted with flowers, and Chen was enchanted. He had never known anything but the thick, white mugs, chipped and cracked, with the handles broken away, that he had used all his life. He played with the little cup, almost afraid to touch it, it seemed so delicate; and he forgot to drink the tea until the lovely lady reminded him that it would be getting cold.

And Chen, who had spoken so little all his life, talked until it seemed he would never stop. And the painted girl decided he was mad; but he was harmless; so she let him talk.

"And what will you do when you get to China?" she asked at last. He did not know; it didn't seem to matter what he did; it only mattered that he should get there. He felt in his soul that the beauty of that magic land would keep him alive, and he would sit all day among the fragrant flowers, while bright birds sang softly, darting in and out of the golden sunbeams. He only knew that he would find peace, and he would be

content to die there among the cherry blossom. As he talked he played gently with the bulging purse, and after a time she said:

"What are you playing with in your pocket? It looks a pretty thing." He brought out the purse, embroidered with Chinese figures, and handed it to her. She ran her finger over the little figures, and opened the flap to look at the red lining. Inside were the ragged notes that Chen had all but given his life to win, the notes he had counted a thousand times.

And away he went again, telling her how he had struggled and starved to collect that money, and he was back in his dream, so that she had to shake him back to earth to give him the purse.

At last he had to go, and he was sorry to leave the kind lady who had given him tea in the little cup. He gently touched the hard, red cheek, and the brightly-painted face seemed to find its way into the picture of the cherry blossom. He stood on the door-step and thanked her with the grace and courtesy of a mandarin, and back he went to his little room, with even more to fill the dreams that had been crowding through his mind all day.

"Got your ticket?" asked Hutch, as Chen closed the door, and stood smiling gently just inside.

"No. That will do to-morrow. I have made a friend. On the last day, when I have lived so many years, I have made a

friend. She was beautiful. She gave me tea in a little painted cup. Her face was—like the cherry blossom." Chen was talking to himself; Hutch smiled. When he spoke his voice was gentle.

"Fancy you picking up a dame, Chen. I thought you never noticed them."

"She was so kind. I talked

to her; I talked to her of China, and she listened. She didn't say I was mad, and she didn't laugh. And then she gave me tea, in a little cup; such a dainty little cup, I thought it would break in my hands."

"You ought to have got rid of that money, Chen. It's not safe carrying it around. It's a wonder you haven't been knifed before now by one of those swines outside."

"To-night I will count it for the last time," said Chen, and drew the purse out of his pocket. As money it meant nothing to him. As the magic wand that would make his dream come true he could never tire of feasting his eyes upon it, and counting it slowly with a child-like joy.

He was still musing dreamily to himself, speaking of the beautiful lady, and he stopped abruptly in the middle of a sentence.

Hutch looked up. "What's wrong, Chen?" The Chinaman was sitting quite still, staring; staring at the embroidered purse in his hands, and it was empty.

"Why, Chen, where's your money?"

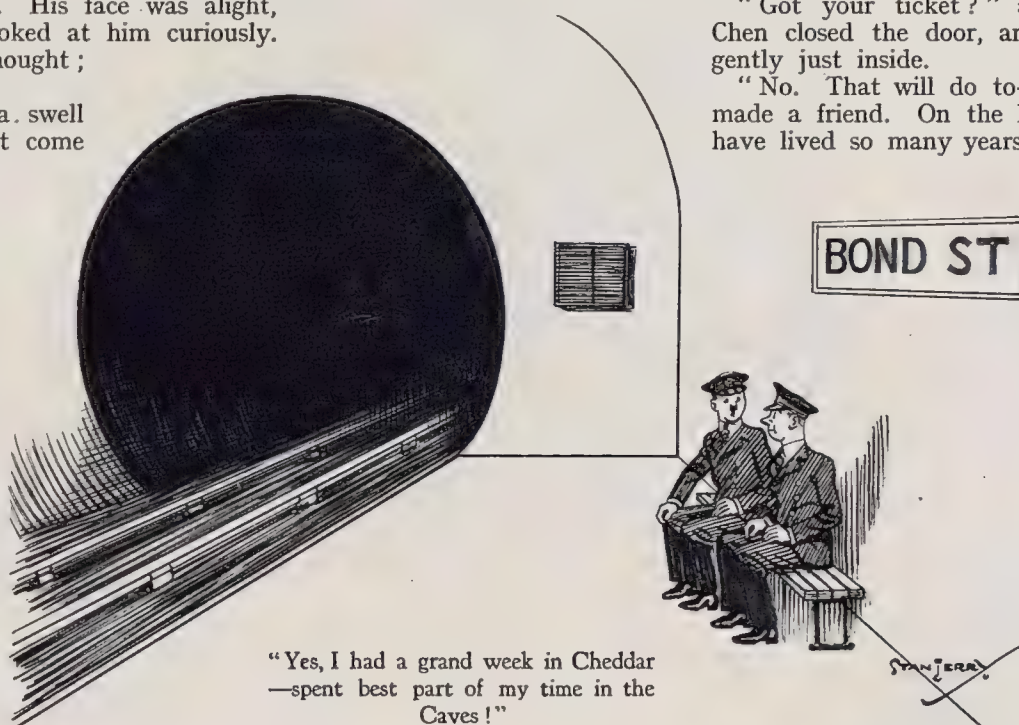
"Gone." The word was a whisper.

"Gone? But you said you hadn't got your ticket. What's happened to the money?"

Chen said nothing; there was nothing to say. Where was the money?

"Look here, Chen, where have you been this afternoon? Who was that dame you picked up?"

[Continued on page vi.]





THE CARTER

By Goom ! it's nigh on half-past-four,
 The horses must be fed ;
 It's not like me to be awake
 And find myself abed :
 Of course it ain't near half-past-four
 It's only half-past-three.
 I can't abide this summer time
 It seems all wrong to me.

The clock that I have ever used
 Looks down from Heav'n on high,
 It tells right time, it alters not,
 It bain't for us to try.
 I can hear the rack chains jingling
 As the old mare stamps the floor,
 Her head turned this way, then turned that
 With an eye upon the door.

Her nose-bag I must fill with food,
 She'll need some in the day ;
 Then home I goes to get a bite
 Before we gets away.
 My missus she looks after me,
 I has a nose-bag too—
 An onion—pickles, bread and cheese,
 A pint of English brew.

Then off we goes the mare and I,
 We care not what we do ;
 We sows or reaps, we mows or ploughs,
 We works the whole day through.
 And when the shades of night descend,
 And we gets home to rest,
 The master knows that we have done—
 Our duty and our best.

Edward Murray.

THE STICKIT CONSTABLE

By

G. H. LUSTY



He seemed a trifle grave and wistful

"STEAMROLLER $\frac{1}{2}\%$. To rolling in Constable Rosebud's boots, 8s. 6d." Naturally, the auditor of our U.D.C. accounts opened his eyes at that item. When it was explained, he didn't exactly laugh; auditors don't; he just leaned back and gazed out at the sky as one who beheld heaven opened.

The circumstances were these.

Constable Rosebud got stuck at the cross-roads. It happened during that sizzling summer a year or two ago, when they experimented with the new compound on the roads. It had to be slapped on pretty thickly in places to even up the surface, and, just at the cross-roads, the wear and tear had been considerable. The stuff was good enough when once thoroughly set: hard as granite, durable, and so forth; but while it was setting it was the devil! Sticky? My hat! The best Scotch glue was mere paste to it. But, of course, that stage was brief.

Now, a policeman on point duty only considers his feet if he has corns. Constable Rosebud hadn't even an ingrowing toe-nail. His aching arms took all his spare thoughts, while his unregarded boots pressed deeper and

deeper into the sticky mess, carrying the meagre sprinkling of grit with them. The fiendish compound oozed up between the particles and all around the soles, and started to set hard and quickly, as per advertisement, until, when the time came for the constable to go off duty, he just couldn't. He was there!

And so, when P.C. 45 arrived to relieve Rosebud, something about his comrade's features made his spine go goosey.

"Waz-a-matter?" he enquired. "Toothache?"

"Toothache!" snorted Constable Rosebud. "Damn!"

His sincerity was beyond doubt, but who or what he was imprecating was not clear.

"Got a pain?" ventured P.C. 45. Thoughts of first aid crossed his mind, but this looked as if it might be mental.



After horrible contortions he had come to rest

"I'm stuck!" announced Constable Rosebud, laconically.

"Eh? Stuck? What d'ye mean, stuck?" His glance dropped to the other's boots.

"Lumme!" he exclaimed. Thoughtlessly, he stooped to examine the position, but a screech of brakes and a smothered exclamation brought him straight again with a jerk. A car had come to a sudden stop.

"Sorry and all that," said a sweet young thing, "but it really wasn't my fault, was it? I wasn't expecting—"

"All right, all right!" broke in P.C. 45, with a majestic sweep of his hand.

"Go ahead, but be a bit more careful."

He returned to the matter in hand.

"D'you mean to say—?" he began.

"I mean to say I'm stuck," snapped Rosebud.

"Crikey! Try sideways." But wriggling sideways proved as futile as wriggling any other way.

"Sticketh closer than a brother, don't it?" remarked P.C. 45 after a fruitless attempt to help. "Whoa! Ups-a-daisy!"

For the helping hand had helped the Stickit Constable backwards. After horrible contortions he had come to rest on his hands in a kind of inverted all-fours attitude, with his helmet over his face and his feet still gripped by the new compound. The helmet mercifully prevented his personal views on the situation from being broadcast. He was taken by surprise, and his remarks were impromptu. It was quite a minute before he could be balanced up again.

Now evolutions like these were bound to excite interest. A butcher's boy stopped himself and his whistling to observe what looked like a free circus. A burst pipe went clean out of a plumber's head, and other things went out of other people's, as they came to the spot, and they gathered and goggled at the queer antics of the two representatives of Law and Respectability.

Soon a crowd had assembled at the cross-roads big enough for a public meeting, and then unexpected things began to happen. The fire-brigade arrived with a glitter and a rush and a clang, and enquired about the fire. Then a couple of very moist constables with a stretcher, looking for the casualty. They had hardly begun to chat things over when the A.A. repair-lorry, complete with crane, glided up and wanted to know about the breakdown.

"I s'pose you got a 'phone-call, too?" suggested an ambulance man.

"That's right."

"Ah, and I'd eat my hat"—he was wiping out his helmet at the moment—"if I couldn't lay my finger on the man. I knowed his voice in a minute."

"Ought to be prosecuted," was the general verdict.

Meanwhile, P.C. Rosebud was still "there." For his greater comfort and convenience they had brought him a chair. Apart from the oddity of a policeman so resting, nothing much appeared to be wrong, except, perhaps, that he seemed a trifle grave and wistful.

The case was still in the committee stage when Providence intervened. Somebody said:

"Oh, lord! here's his missis!"

And, sure enough, the crowd made way for yet another arrival—the lady referred to.

"What's all this?" she demanded.

"Tell me, did ye get a call on the telephone?" asked the ambulance man.

"Sure 'twas me neighbour got that. The man told him me husband wanted his other pair of boots, and I'd find him at the cross-roads. Just that, and he shut off."

"Good biz! and ye've got the boots in the basket?"

"I have not then. Would I be carting them big, heavy things all over the town? But I've got his carpet slippers. And what is it's the matter at all?"

"Matter? Can't ye see he's stuck?"

"Stuck? D'ye mean—?"

As the truth dawned upon her, the puzzled look faded,

and it would have done you good to see and hear her laugh.

"There!" she said to her spouse when her merriment had subsided to a giggle, "unlace yer boots do, and get into these. You're late for tea as it is."

"I must go and report."

"Well, hurry up!"

And that was how Providence intervened. As for the crowd and the fire-brigade and the ambulance-men and the boots...

Ah! the boots! Believe it or not, they just couldn't get those boots free from the grip of the new compound. They cut the uppers away, but the soles still interfered with the traffic. Rammers were useless; the stuff smiled at rammers. In the end they chartered the steam-roller, and it cost the town that item of 8s. 6d., on top of the price of the boots, to roll the remnants out of sight.

THE END.

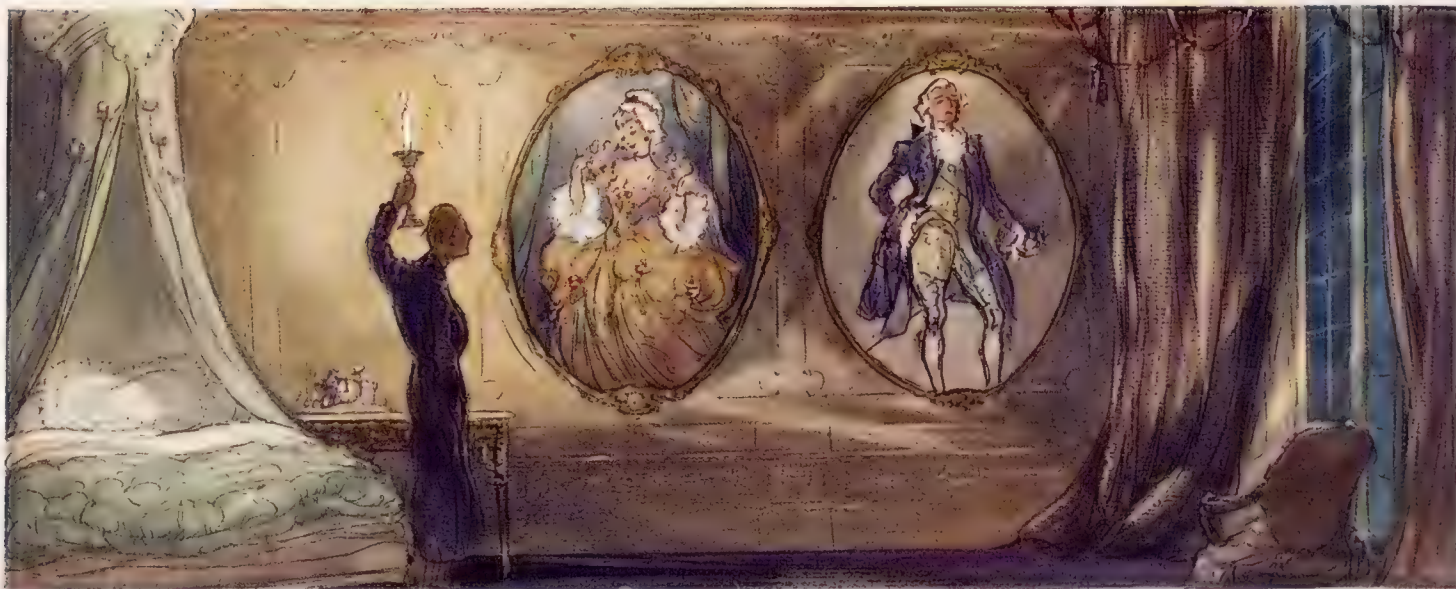


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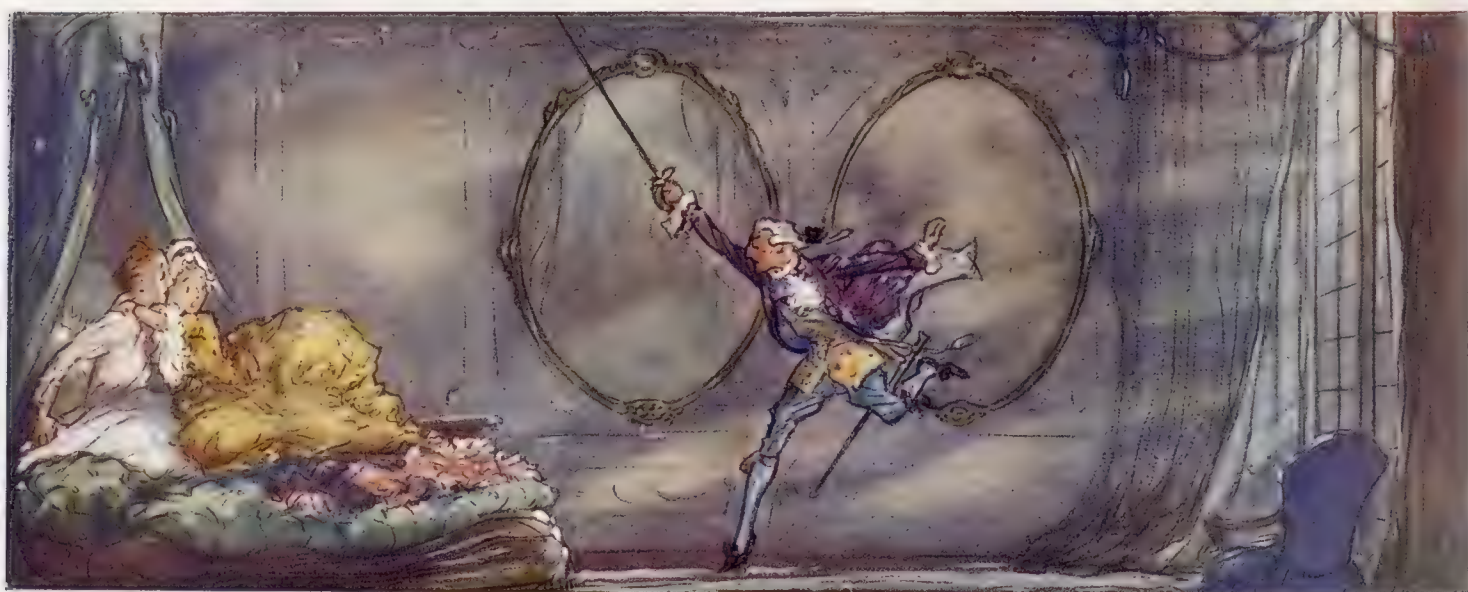
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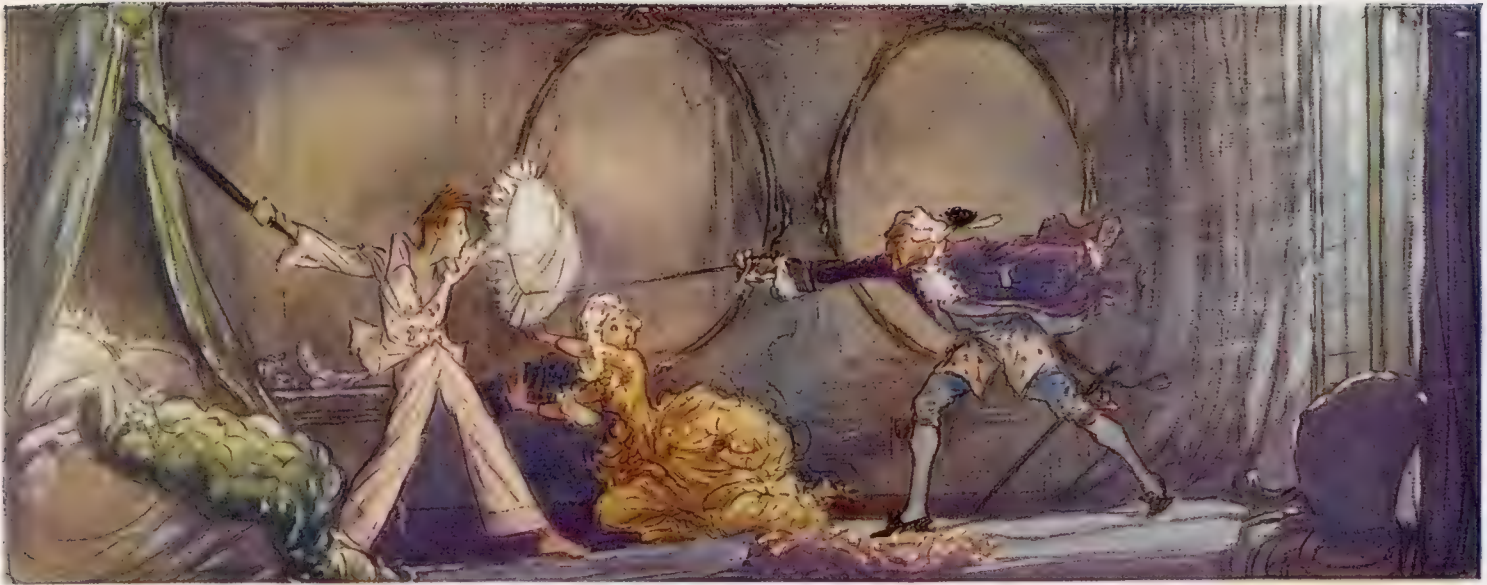
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3

The Fragonard Portraits and how they brought

By A. K.



4



5



6

Une Nuit Fantastique in a Château Guest Room

MACDONALD



One of Britains Fine Cars

THE FIXER-UPPER.—(Continued from page 28.)

"Don't be insolent, boy," Mr. Noakes answered mechanically. "That's no way to discuss your uncle and aunt. They're guests of your mother's."

The boy looked down the table at his father and winked. "You bet they are. They'll stay another three weeks. I heard Aunt Mary tell Mother so this morning. Three weeks, Father. They're guests all right. Guaranteed."

They looked at one another, and Mr. Noakes cleared his throat. "Er—Jim," he said, and paused. Rising from his seat, he closed the door of the room. As he went back to his place again he could hear the booming voice of Albert telling the gardener where he should have planted the tulips if he had expected to get anything more than mediocre results.

"Yes. Er—Jim," Mr. Noakes said again.

"Man-to-man, Father?" Jim said.

"Exactly, boy. Man-to-man. Er—what do you . . .

You know, Jim, I think another week of your uncle and aunt would just about drive me insane. Nice people, boy, mark you," he added quickly. "The very best in the world. Hearts of gold, but . . ."

"Yes, Father." The boy winked slowly, and his father coughed.

"Yes, Jim. I can think of no solution. I have shown my irritation: useless. I have even hinted at their leaving: useless again. I have said that we—your mother, you and I—were going away for a short time. But your uncle offered to stay on here alone and look after the place. Your aunt said she 'would brighten it up a bit.' Yes. Very awkward, Jim. They just mean to stay and stay. And, besides, your mother—er . . ."

Jim looked along the table, and ran his stubby fingers through his thick, untidy hair. "I was wondering," he said. "I think I could guarantee to move them, Father, in a couple of days."

"Move them? Don't be rude, boy. You misunderstand me. What nonsense! Why, it's . . . How, boy?"

"I think I know how, Father." Jim paused a moment, and then smiled wickedly. "Could I ask my friend Harry Lemp to stay here for a week-end—no, a week? Harry's a fixer-upper."

"Lemp? Who is he? Oh, yes. Lemp? That's the boy your schoolmaster told me about. The boy who is so . . . He's just a ruffian, isn't he? What mad idea have you got now? Fixer-upper!"

Jim grinned again. "It's good," he said. "And it'll work well, too. It's a jolly good idea."

Mr. Noakes raised his eyebrows and then frowned suspiciously. "Yes? Let me hear it. It had better be good—and it had better work, too. But you mustn't—er—let your mother think I have anything to do with driving people away. Never let the matter rest afterwards."

Jim nodded wisely. "You listen," he said.

Mr. Noakes listened for several minutes, and then smiled grimly. "Well, you may be right," he said. "If your friend Lemp has this kind of genius. I can see no reason," he went on in a different voice, "why your friend should not spend a few days here." He looked anxiously over his shoulder. "Er—Jim, remember, I am in no conspiracy with you, and I will have no violence or practical joking in the house. You understand?"

"There's just one other thing," Jim said casually, but cocking a wary eye on his father. "There's the matter of the new bicycle idea I was talking to you about."

"Rubbish, boy. You don't want a new bicycle."

"Oh, well. I think Harry Lemp has one, and he would bring it with him, and then we could have something in common. But if I didn't have a bicycle, I don't think he'd want

to come here. Come to think of it, I'm sure he wouldn't."

Jim shook his head. Mr. Noakes scowled. "I see," he said. "Well—all right. But, man-to-man, Jim, this had better be good."

Jim grinned. "You bet, Father. You leave it all to me, and I won't say anything. This is our conspiracy. Man-to-man."

Mr. Noakes coughed. "'Conspiracy'? Don't be ridiculous." He peered over the tops of his glasses at his son. "You asked if your friend Harry could stay here with you—and I said 'yes.' All right, then let him come. Conspiracy? I don't know what you're driving at. Run along, boy, and leave me alone."



"You FIENDS! Your vile driving has been the means of breaking a pledge of over fifty years' standing!"

Jim rose from his chair and strolled to the door. He still had the grin on his face. "All right, Father. Have it your own way. But Harry gets *carte blanche*—and me too. Okay? Then you wait and see. Harry never fails, and he won't this time. You watch him."

Mr. Noakes smiled grimly. It would be a pleasure.

"Don't say 'okay,'" he said severely.

"*Carte blanche*, Father. You said so."

"Oh, ah!—yes. *Carte blanche*."

"Okay?" Jim said, grinning.

Mr. Noakes coughed discreetly. "Er—yes, boy. Okay."

Harry Lemp was a problem to everyone but himself. He was a large boy of seventeen, with an even larger head, and a mountainous self-assurance. It was considered by the more objective few that he would go far, and his immediate family, hearing this, had been known to express the hope that he would start soon. He was cheerful and good-natured, a clean and sober boy—but unloved. He had the remarkable gift of making people dislike him instantly, and seemed to enjoy the power it gave him. Being cheerfully amazed, or quietly satisfied when his policy of turning every conversation into an argument had succeeded in goading someone to violence or to insult, made the goaded one rage against him impotently and leave his position unassailed. Being a complete heel, he had no Achilles heel for a weakness.

Harry appeared almost unostentatiously in the Noakes home, and after a talk with Jim, seemed to produce his full personality at once. It flowed from him like water from a fire-hose.

At lunch he said little. Albert was describing a *safari* in the minutest detail, raising his voice every time interrupting voices threatened his monopoly. But Harry's silence and non-talkativeness, at first a disappointment to Mr. Noakes, was all the more sinister. He was weighing the opposition, and gradually finding range. Gradually he started a barrage of interruption, and worked up to something more. He alternately sucked his teeth, rattled the money in his pockets, hummed and whistled, and drummed his fingers on the table.

"Do you have to make all that noise, boy?" Albert boomed at him finally, after faltering in the middle of a sentence which had failed under an obbligo of "Loch Lomond." "Interestin' talk; describing something any boy ought to be keen on; somethin' new to you. Keep quiet boy, and don't interrupt."

"Eh? Do what?" Harry said.

"I didn't say *do* anything! I said what do you have to sit there fidgeting and . . ."

Harry gave him a flat stare. He cracked his finger-joints one by one, and gradually closed his fists. Immediately all the joints cracked back again with sounds like breaking sticks.

Everyone else winced, even Mrs. Noakes, who had been smirking.

" . . . fiddle-faddling about," Albert droned on, "like an—an—why don't you listen, boy? Why, when I was your age . . ."

"Do what?" Harry said. "Do what, sir? Eh?"

"I said 'Why don't you—'"

"Ow!" Harry said, holding his ears. "I'm not deaf."

Albert breathed deeply and noisily. "Young man," he said, "don't you try to be funny."

Harry blinked. "Do what, sir?" he said. "Eh?"

"Harry," Mrs. Noakes said desperately, "why don't you and Jim go out for a ride on your bicycles?"

"No, thanks," Harry said. "Not for me. I like being here, please. I like the way Mr. Wallington talks. Fascinating."

"Wallison!" Albert said. "Not 'Wallington.'"

"Then why don't you listen?" Mary said. "Instead of interrupting all the time. I'm sure it was most instructive."

"Oh, I don't want to *listen*. I just like watching that interesting wart wobble on his cheek."

"What!" Albert cried. He was crimson with rage. "What did you say? How dare you, sir! Outrageous! Has no one ever taught you manners, young man?" He snorted gustily with anger.

"Do what?" Harry said. "You don't have to shout. I told you I'm not deaf, you know." He sniffed. "There *were* onions in that salad, then. I can smell them from here!"

"Jim!" Mrs. Noakes pleaded, looking at her son.

Jim rose, solemn-faced, glanced swiftly at his father, and almost dragged Harry from the room. Albert was almost apoplectic.

Mr. Noakes' face was expressionless as they exchanged looks.

"Arthur, how long is that boy staying here?" Albert said.

"I'm not sure. A week or so, I expect."

"He must leave at once. Boy's impossible. Behaves like a cad."

"He's Jim's guest, Albert, not mine. He was invited here," Mr. Noakes said calmly. "I can't tell any guest here to get out, even if I wanted to. Inhospitable."

"Arthur!" Mrs. Noakes said ominously.

"Well, *can* I, dearest?"

Albert scowled angrily and muttered to himself, and immediately he had finished his third cup of coffee he went out for a long walk alone.

It was only a question of time, however, before the second clash of wills occurred. However much Albert wished to avoid the boy Harry, he liked his food too much to absent himself from any meals. So he returned to the house at six to bathe and change into his dinner-jacket. The ritual of changing for dinner every night he had imposed on the Noakes from the start. At least, Mrs. Noakes had capitulated, though Mr. Noakes would only compromise by wearing a dark suit. The Traditions meant nothing to him, as Albert had remarked meaningly.

Scowling crossly, then, Albert entered the drawing-room at 6.45, the usual half-pace ahead of his lady, who was wearing a bright and obviously new dress.

Harry Lemp and Jim were there waiting for them. "Ah, good evening, sir! Good evening, Mrs. Wallingford," Harry said, with suspicious politeness.

"Good evening," Albert said warily. "'Wallison' is the name."

"Sorry, Mr. Walliton. Thought that was what I said. You ought to listen more carefully. People with funny names are often too touchy, I always think."

Albert went red and opened his mouth to reply. But the door opened, and Mr. Noakes came in, and that distracted his mind from what he had been going to say.

Harry turned to Mrs. Wallison with a bright smile. "I say, fancy you making that dress yourself. One would hardly know it."

"Making it myself!" Mary shrilled, spinning round on him.

"Very clever. And those shoes look fine, too. So big and comfortable. None of those pinched-in, tight shoes you usually see nowadays." Harry smiled at her ingenuously.

Mary Wallison turned her back furiously, and snorted with anger. Her face was livid.

"How dare you, sir!" Albert thundered. "Arthur, are you going to permit this humiliation of my wife in your house?"

"Feel!" Harry said, and put his large hands on Mary's bare back. "Ever feel such cold hands?"

The maid's thin voice announcing dinner was drowned in the startled shriek from Mary's wide-open mouth, and it was some minutes before the hubbub of vituperation, humble apologies in hurt tones, pacifications and so forth died down sufficiently to enable them all to go into the dining-room.

[Continued on page 58.]



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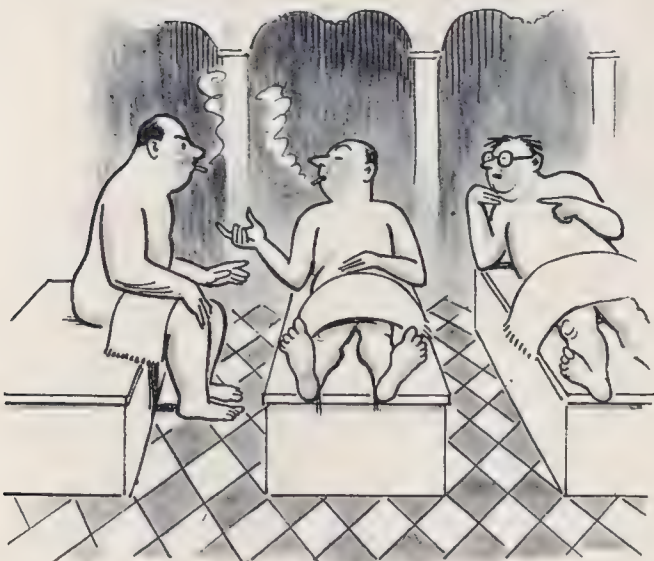
ATHENÆUM.



TURF.



SAVAGE.



BATH.



GARRICK.

Discussion of the Same Crisis at Different Clubs.

DRAWN BY H. M. BATEMAN

THE FIXER-UPPER.—(Continued from page 56.)

"Er-rrm!" Mr. Noakes said awkwardly, after he had said grace. "Hungry, Albert?"

Albert nodded grimly. He had had a long walk, and he had a corresponding appetite as a result. Furthermore, he had no wish to talk, and looked forward to putting in an hour's solid enjoyment of food.

But dinner was not a success, for him or for anyone, except for Harry. The boy developed and perfected a great gift for graphic description. And his story concerning a friend of his who suffered from a peculiarly vile skin disease allied to an ulcerated stomach seemed to kill everyone's appetite, even after he had been suppressed and had apologised.

So dinner was a failure, even conversationally, and died a miserable death on a wisecrack.

Albert, almost in self-defence, rallied his forces and told one of his interminable stories over the coffee, to the now-expected accompaniment of cracking finger-joints and rattlings.

"... so we naturally black-balled the feller from the Club, and he never showed his face again," Albert droned on. "That shows you, heh?"

Harry sighed noisily. "That story," he said, "reminds me of an armless looker-on—there's no point."

Albert's slightly protuding eyes almost fell out of his head. "You—you—" he began, but the raised hand of the horrible Harry checked him.

"Let me tell you something now," Harry said. "It was on a Thursday; no, a Wednesday—or was it Tuesday? No, Thursday. I'm sure it was Thursday, because that was the day I saw old Jones and he only comes out on Thursday. Well, then, it was Thursday—or, was it? Well, anyway, we made him resign from the Club, and he never showed his face there again, the blackguard!"

"What are you talking about, Harry?" Mrs. Noakes said tartly. She glanced down the table at her irate brother, but he had risen, white-faced with suppressed murderous tendencies, and was stalking from the room.

Mary Wallison rose also, dutifully, and stood for a moment glaring down at the *raconteur*. But Harry's answering stare was bewildered. "Have I said anything wrong?" he asked pathetically. "Have I offended your husband somehow? I'm really very sorry if I have, Mrs. Waterford."

Raking him with a look of contempt, Mary swept from the room.

Harry looked round and raised his eyebrows in great surprise. "My! People are touchy," he said. "It certainly beats me."

Mrs. Noakes took a deep breath. "Harry, you were very impertinent," she said. "Mr. and Mrs. Wallison are my guests, and they must be respected as such. Remember that, please!"

"Yes, of course," Harry said stiffly. "And I meant no harm, either. In fact, I'd leave the house now, if you wanted me to—only I can't," he said.

"You *can't*?" Mr. and Mrs. Noakes said together, fear clutching at each of them, but for different reasons.

"Oh, no," Harry said cheerfully. "You see, my own family has gone away and closed up the house. It was most convenient my being asked here to stay with old Jim."

"Yes, of course. *Most* convenient," Mrs. Noakes said weakly.

Mr. Noakes lit a cigarette, and smiled calmly to himself. The boy was a master. He could lie like a politician. He "couldn't leave." His "family had gone away." Beautiful. He was In, and In he would have to stay. Lovely.

"Ahem!" he said. "Let us go into the next room and join the others." He winked at Harry, but, surprisingly, there was no response.

As usual, they played bridge after dinner, but this evening the game was anything but usual. The Noakes

played the Wallisons. At least, that was the original idea, but gradually it became evident that the Wallisons had an ally, in Harry. The first few hands he allowed to pass without any actual comment, though his sharp intake of breath each time Albert prepared to play a card, and his *tst! tst!* after he had played it, served as comment for most purposes. Then Harry started giving advice.

But Albert saw where that might lead, and tried to check the endeavour before it could get under way. "You are, no doubt, an expert player, my boy," he boomed terrifyingly. "But it might interest you to know that I have played bridge nearly all my life—and contract bridge since the day it came out. *Thank you!*"

"Well, that's amazing, Sir," Harry said. "Just shows you it's a game you can't pick up just by plodding."

"Ahem!" Mary said quickly, leaping into the breach. "Don't let us quarrel again." She glared meaningly at Harry. "Ar—Albert. What was that amusing story you said you wanted to tell Arthur?"

"Story? Oh, yes. Arrhm! Story." Albert's face cleared slightly. "Oh, yes, Arthur; story about the Scotchman and the Jew who went in for the bicycle race. Stop me if you've heard it."

"All right. I have, for one," Harry said at once.

"What? Well, maybe some of our friends here have *not*," Albert said stiffly. "Keep quiet, boy! Don't be impertinent."

"Do what, Sir? Eh?"

"I said: Maybe the others have not heard it."

"You just *said* that. Heard what, Sir? Speak up."

"The story about the Scotchman and the Jew who went in—"

"Not heard it? Then they must have been unconscious for years. But what do *you* care, eh? You'll tell it, anyway."

Albert thumped his fist violently on the table and knocked over a glass of port. His outraged comments were choked immediately by the disaster, and he became contrite.

After the confusion had been settled, the bridge-game limped on for a bare half-hour before dying a natural death. Everyone in the room was on edge as Albert and Harry eyed one another, like an old and a young bull vying for domination. It became obvious all at once that the duel had reached its final stage, for each combatant was determined to rout the other somehow; anyhow.

Mr. Noakes sat back comfortably and watched them. He felt like a man who has discovered two bombs and wonders vaguely which will explode first, even before he considers his own safety.

Every story Albert told that evening was either interrupted or capped by another story from Harry. Every theory which Albert proposed was routed by Harry's quotations from an uncle who was, he said, a Professor of Economics. Every escapade was listened to with a tolerant contempt, however interested anyone else happened to be. But even so, Albert found himself addressing his conversation more and more towards his tormentor, as if some blind instinct told him he had to defeat, or win over, this boy; or perish.

The others sat and listened, and time passed slowly. Then, one by one, they made dim excuses and wandered away to bed. Mary Wallison went first, then Mrs. Noakes, then Jim. Apprehension; Anger; and Amusement tinged with uneasiness.

At midnight, Albert was just finishing the saga of his early struggles against the jungle, and Harry was still cracking his finger-joints and whistling through his teeth; while Mr. Noakes was in a daze of sleepiness, but obstinately remained conscious, determined to see the finish.

Slowly the Albert autobiography crawled to its end. All Albert's power had been put into the telling. "... so there, boy," Albert said, his ginger moustache bristling

(Continued on page viii)

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SMITH *versus* LICHTENSTEIGER

By WESTON MARTYR

SMITH stood 5 feet 5 inches in his boots, weighed nearly 10 stone in his winter clothes and an overcoat, and he had a flat chest and a round stomach. Smith was a clerk in a small branch bank in East Anglia; he was not an athlete or a fighting man, although he followed the fortunes of a professional football team in the newspapers with great interest, and he had fought for a year in France without ever seeing his enemy or achieving a closer proximity to him than one hundred and twenty yards. When a piece of shrapnel reduced his fighting efficiency by abolishing the biceps of one arm, Smith departed from the field of battle and (as he himself would certainly have put it) "in due course" returned to his branch bank.

head-winds drove him into Ostend and detained him there three days.

Lichtensteiger was also detained at Ostend; but not by the weather. Lichtensteiger had come from Alexandria, with a rubber tube stuffed full of morphine wound round his waist next his skin, and he was anxious to get to London as quickly as he could. He had already been as far as Dover, but there a Customs official (who had suspicions but no proof) whispered to a friend in the Immigration Department, and Lichtensteiger found himself debarred as an "undesirable alien" from entering the United Kingdom. He had therefore returned to Ostend in the steamer in which he had left that place.

Lichtensteiger stood 6 feet 1 inch in his socks, weighed



Lichtensteiger drove his head with all his might into Smith's stomach, and Smith doubled up on the cockpit floor.

For forty-nine weeks each year Smith laboured faithfully at his desk. In his free hours during the winter he read Joseph Conrad, Stevenson and E. F. Knight, and he did hardly anything else. But every year in early April Smith suddenly came to life. For he was a yachtsman, and he owned a tiny yacht which he called the *Kate* and loved with a great love. The spring evenings he spent fitting out, painting and fussing over his boat. Thereafter, as early as possible every Saturday afternoon, he set sail and cruised alone amongst the tides and sandbanks of the Thames Estuary, returning again as late as possible on Sunday night. And every summer, when his three weeks' holiday came round, Smith and his *Kate* would sail away from East Anglia together and voyage afar. One year Smith cruised to Falmouth in the West Countree, and he likes to boast about that cruise still. Once he set out for Cherbourg, which is a port in foreign parts; but that time, thanks to a westerly gale, he got no farther than Dover. The year Smith encountered Lichtensteiger he had sailed as far east as Flushing, and he was on his way back when a spell of bad weather and

14 stone stripped, and he had a round chest and a flat stomach. He was as strong as a gorilla, as quick in action as a mongoose, and he had never done an honest day's work in his life. There is reason to believe that Lichtensteiger was a Swiss, as he spoke Switzer-Deutsch, which is something only a German-Swiss can do. His nationality, however, is by no means certain, because he looked like a Lombard, carried Rumanian and Austrian passports, and in addition to the various dialects used in those two countries, he spoke French like a Marseillais, German like a Würtemberger, and English like a native of the lower West Side of New York.

When Smith and Lichtensteiger first set eyes on each other, Smith was sitting in the *Kate's* tiny cockpit, smoking his pipe and worrying about the weather. For Smith's holiday was nearly over; he was due at his bank again in three days, and he knew he could not hope to sail back while the strong north-westerly wind continued to blow straight from East Anglia towards Belgium. Said Smith to himself, "Hang it! I've got to sail tomorrow or get into a nasty fix. And if only I had two

sound arms I *would* sail to-morrow and chance it; but a hundred-mile beat to wind'ard all by myself is going to be no joke. What I need is another man to help me; but there isn't an earthly hope of getting hold of anyone in this filthy hole."

Lichtensteiger was walking along the quay. He glanced at the *Kate* and her owner with a disdainful eye and passed on, because neither the boat nor the man held any interest for him. But in Lichtensteiger's card-index-like mind, in which he filed without conscious effort most of the things he heard and saw, there were registered three impressions and one deduction: "A yacht. The British flag. An Englishman. A fool." Having filed these particulars, Lichtensteiger's mind was about to pass on to the problem of how to get Lichtensteiger to London, when an idea flashed like a blaze of light into his consciousness. To translate Lichtensteiger's multi-lingual thoughts is difficult; a free rendering of them must suffice. Said Lichtensteiger to himself, "Thunder and lightning. Species of a goose. You poor fish. Of course. It is *that*! If you had a yacht—if you were a sailor—*there* is the obvious solution. Then there no more need would be to risk placing oneself in the talons of the sacred bureaucrats of Customs or within the despicable jurisdiction of blood-sucking immigration officials. Why, say! If I had a little boat I guess I wouldn't worry myself about smuggling my dope through no Dovers and suchlike places. With a boat of my own then veritably would I be a smuggler, classical and complete. But what's the use? I ain't got no boat and I ain't no sailor. But hold! Attention! The English yacht. That fool Englishman. There are possibilities in that direction there. Yes. I guess I go back and take another look at that guy."

Lichtensteiger's second survey of Smith was detailed and thorough, and it confirmed his previous judgment. "Easy meat," said Lichtensteiger to himself, and then, aloud, "Evening, stranger. Pardon me, but I see you're British, and I guess it'll sound good to me to hear someone talk like a Christian for a change. I'm from Noo York, and Otis T. Merritt's my name. I'm over on this side for vacation; but I'll tell you the truth, I don't cotton to these darned Dagoes and Squareheads here, not at all. So I reckon to catch the next boat across to your good country, mister, and spend the balance of my trip there with white men. That's a peach of a little yacht you got. I'll say she certainly is. She's a pippin, and I guess you have a number one first-class time sailing around in her. It's just the kind of game I've always had in mind to try for myself. It 'ud suit me down to the ground, I reckon. If you've no objections, I'll step aboard. I'd sure like to look her over. Where are you sailing to next after here?"

"Harwich," answered Smith. "Come aboard and look round if you like, by all means; but I'm afraid you won't find very much to see here."

"Why, she's the finest little ship I ever set eyes on!" cried Lichtensteiger a few minutes later, settling himself on the cabin settee. "And to think you run her all alone. My gracious! Have a cigar?"

"Thanks," said Smith. "I do sail her by myself usually, but this time I'm afraid I've bitten off more than I can chew. You see, I've got to get back to Harwich within three days. If I had another man to help me I'd do it easily, but with this wind blowing it's a bit more than I care to tackle alone."

After that, of course, it was easy for Lichtensteiger. He did not ask Smith if he could sail with him; he led Smith on to make that suggestion himself. Then he hesitated awhile at the unexpectedness of the proposal, and when he finally yielded to persuasion he left Smith with the impression that he was doing him a favour. It was very beautifully done.

That night Lichtensteiger transferred himself and two suit-cases from his hotel and slept aboard the *Kate*. At daybreak next morning they sailed. Once outside the

harbour entrance Smith found the wind had fallen to a moderate breeze, but it still blew out of the north-west, making the shaping of a direct course to Harwich impossible. Smith, therefore, did the best he could. He put the *Kate* on the starboard tack and sailed her to the westward along the Belgian coast.

It did not take Smith long to discover that Lichtensteiger was no sailor. He could not steer or even make fast a rope securely. In half an hour it became clear to Smith that Lichtensteiger literally did not know one end of the boat from the other, and within an hour he realised that his passenger, instead of helping him, was going to be a hindrance and an infernal nuisance as well. Lichtensteiger did all those things which must on no account be done if life is to be made livable in the confined space aboard a small boat. In addition to other crimes, Lichtensteiger grumbled at the motion, the hardness of the bunks and the lack of head-room in the cabin. He left his clothes scattered all over the yacht; he used the deck as a spittoon, and he sprawled at ease in the cockpit, so that every time Smith had to move in a hurry he tripped over Lichtensteiger's legs. By midday Smith had had as much of Lichtensteiger's company as he felt he could stand. Now that the weather was fine and looked like remaining so, he knew he could easily sail the *Kate* home by himself. He said, "Look here, Merritt; I'm afraid you don't find yachting in such a small boat is as much fun as you thought it was going to be. See those buildings sticking up on the shore there? Well, that's Dunkerque, and I'll sail in and land you, and then you can catch the night boat over to Tilbury nice and comfortably. I'll run you in there in half an hour."

Smith's suggestion astounded Lichtensteiger, and produced in him so profound an alarm that he forgot for a moment that he was Merritt. His eyes blazed, the colour vanished from his face, and tiny beads of sweat hopped out upon it. Then Lichtensteiger emitted some most extraordinary sounds which, had Smith but known it, were Switzer-Deutsch curses of a horrid and disgusting kind, coupled with an emphatic and blasphemous assertion that nothing—not even ten thousand flaming blue devils—could force him to set foot upon the suppurating soil of France. In fairness to Lichtensteiger it must be stated that he very rarely forgot himself, or any part he might happen to be playing, and it was also always difficult to frighten him. But the toughest ruffian may be, perhaps, excused if he shrinks from venturing into a country which he has betrayed in time of war. And this is what Lichtensteiger had done to France, or, more precisely, he had twice double-crossed the French Army Intelligence Department, Section Counter-Espionage, Subsection N.C.D. And the penalty for doing this, as Lichtensteiger well knew, is death. Since 1916, when Lichtensteiger succeeded in escaping from that country by the skin of his teeth, France was a place which he had taken the most sedulous pains to avoid, and at the sudden prospect of being landed there he lost his grip of himself for fifteen seconds. Then he pulled himself together and grinned at Smith and said, "Dunkerque nix! Nothing doing. I guess not. And don't you make any mistake, brother; I think this yachting stuff's just great. I'm getting a whale of a kick out of it. So we'll keep on a-going for Harwich. Sure, we will. You bet. And no Dunkerque. No, sir. No Dunkerque for mine. Forget it."

Smith said, "Oh! All right," and that was all he said. But he was thinking hard. He thought, "By God! That was queer. That—was—*damned* queer. The fellow was scared to death. Yes—to death! For I'll swear nothing else could make a man look like that so suddenly. He turned absolutely green. And he sweated. And his eyes—he was terrified. And he yammered, panicked, babbled—in German, too, by the sound of it. By gosh! I wonder who he is? *And what it is he's been up to?* Something damnable, by the look of it. And whatever it was, he did it in Dunkerque—or in France, anyway. That's plain. To look like that at the mere thought of

landing in France! My God, he might be a murderer, or anything! Cleared out into Belgium and hanging about, waiting his chance to get away probably. And here I am, helping him to escape. Oh, Lord, what a fool I was to let him come. I actually *asked* him to come. Or did I? Yes, I did; but it seems to me now, with *this* to open my eyes, that he meant to come all the time. He did! He led me on to ask him. I can see it all now. He's a clever, crafty devil—and he's twice my size! Oh, hang it all! This is *nasty*."

Smith was so absorbed by his thoughts that he did not notice the change of wind coming. The *Kate* heeled suddenly to the puff, her sheets strained and creaked, and she began to string a wake of bubbles and foam behind her. "Hullo," said Smith, "wind's shifted and come more out of the north. We'll be able to lay our course a little better now; she's heading up as high as nor'-west. I'll just see where that course takes us to if you'll bring up the chart."

Lichtensteiger brought the chart from the cabin table and Smith spread it out upon the deck. "Not so good," said he, after gazing at it for a while. "We can't fetch within forty miles of Harwich on this tack. A nor'-west course only just clears the Goodwins and the North Foreland. Look."

"Then why don't you point the boat straight for Harwich," said Lichtensteiger, "instead of going 'way off to the left like that?"

"Because this isn't a steamer, and we can't sail against the wind. But we'll get to Harwich all right, although if this wind holds we won't be there before to-morrow night."

"To-morrow night," said Lichtensteiger. "Well, that suits me. What sort of a kind of a place is this Harwich, anyway? Walk ashore there, I suppose, as soon as we get in, without any messing about?"

"Oh, yes. But we'll have to wait till the morning probably, for the Customs to come off and pass us."

"Customs!" said Lichtensteiger. "Customs! I thought—you'd think, in a one-hole dorp like Harwich, there wouldn't be no Customs and all that stuff. And, anyways, you don't mean to tell me the Customs'll worry about a little bit of a boat like this?"

"Oh, yes, they will," Smith answered. "Harwich isn't the hole you seem to think it is. It's a big port. We're arriving from foreign, and if we went ashore before the Customs and harbour-master and so on passed us, there'd be the very devil of a row."

"Well, crying out loud!" said Lichtensteiger. "What a hell of a country! Not that the blamed Customs worry me any; but—well, what about all this Free Trade racket you Britishers blow about? Seems to me, with your damned Customs and immigration sharps and passports, an' God knows what all, you've got Great Britain tied up a blame sight tighter than the United States." Saying which, Lichtensteiger spat viciously upon the deck and went below to think things over.

Before Lichtensteiger finished his thinking the sun had set, and when he came on deck again, with his plan of action

decided upon, it was night. Said he, "Gee! It's black. Say, how d'you know where you're going to when you can't see? And where the hell are we now, anyway?"

"A mile or so nor'-west of the Sandettie Bank."

"That don't mean nothing to me. Where is this Sandettie place?"

"It's about twenty miles from Ramsgate one way and eighteen from Calais the other."

"Twenty miles from Ramsgate?" said Lichtensteiger. "Well, listen here, brother. I guess I've kind of weakened on this Harwich idea. It's too far, and it's going to take too long getting there. And I find this yachting game ain't all it's cracked up to be by a long sight. To tell you the truth, without any more flim-flam, I'm fed right up to the gills with this, and the sooner you get me ashore and out of it the better. See? Twenty miles ain't far, and I reckon Ramsgate, or anywhere around that way, will do me fine. Get me? Now you point her for Ramsgate right away and let's get a move on."

"But, I say—look here!" protested Smith. "I don't want to go to Ramsgate. I mean, I've got to get back to Harwich by to-morrow night, and if we put into Ramsgate I'll lose hours and hours. We can't get there till after midnight, and you won't be able to land before daylight at the very earliest, because the Customs won't pass us till then. And—"

"Oh, hell!"

broke in Lichtensteiger. "Customs at Ramsgate, too, are there? Well, say, that's all right. I'll tell you what we'll do. We won't trouble no flaming Customs—and save time that way. You land me on the beach, somewheres outside the town, where it's quiet and there's no one likely to be around. I'll be all right then. I'll hump my suit-cases into this Ramsgate place and catch the first train to London in the morning. That'll suit me down to the ground."

"But look here! I can't do that!" said Smith.

"What d'you mean, you can't? You can. What's stopping you?"

"Well, if you will have it, Merritt," answered Smith. "I'll tell you straight—I don't like being a party to landing a man—any man—in the way you want me to. It's illegal. I might get into trouble over it, and I can't afford to get into trouble. If they heard in the bank, I'd lose my job. I'd be ruined. I'm sorry, but I can't risk it. Why, if we got caught they might put us in prison!"

"Caught! You poor fish," said Lichtensteiger. "How can you get caught? All you've got to do is to put me ashore in the dark in that little boat we're pulling behind us, and then you vamoose and go to Harwich—or hell, if you like. I'll be damned if I care. And you can take it from me now, brother, you've got to put me ashore whether you like it or not. And if you don't like it, I'm going to turn to right here and make you. See? All this darned shinanyking makes me tired. I'm through with it and it's time you tumbled to who's boss here—you one-armed, mutt-faced, sawn-off little son



"The Doctor ordered me cycling for fresh air."

of a b—— you! You steer this boat for Ramsgate, *now*, pronto, and land me like I said, or by Gor, I'll scrape that fool face off the front of your silly head and smear the rest of you all over the boat! So—jump to it! Let's see some action, quick!"

If Smith had not been born and bred in the midst of an habitually peaceful and law-abiding community, he might perhaps have understood that Lichtensteiger meant to do what he said. But Smith had never encountered a really *bad* and utterly unscrupulous human being in all his life before. In spite of the feeble imitations of the breed which he had seen inside the cinemas, Smith did not believe in such things as human wolves. It is even doubtful if Smith had ever envisaged himself as being involved in a fight which was not more or less governed by the Marquess of Queensberry's rules. It is a fact that Smith would never have dreamed of kicking a man when he was down or of hitting anyone below the belt, and he made the mistake of believing that Lichtensteiger must, after all, be more or less like himself. Smith believed that Lichtensteiger's threats, though alarming, were not to be taken seriously. He therefore said, "Here! I say! You can't say things like that, you know. This is my boat and I won't——"

But Smith did not get any further. Lichtensteiger interrupted him. He drove his heel with all his might into Smith's stomach, and Smith doubled up with a grunt and dropped on the cockpit floor. Lichtensteiger then kicked him in the back and the mouth, spat in his face and stamped on him. When Smith came to he heard Lichtensteiger saying, "You'll be wise, my buck, to get on to the fact that I took pains, that time, not to hurt you. Next time, though, I reckon to beat you up good. So—cut out the grunting and all that sob-stuff and let's hear if you're going to do what I say. Let's hear from you. Or do you want another little dose?"

Smith vomited. When he could speak he said, "I can't——. Ah, God! Don't kick me again! I'll do it! I'll do what you want! But—I can't—get up. I think my back's—broken."

Smith lay still and gasped, until his breath and his wits returned to him. He explored his hurts with his fingers gingerly, and then he sat up and nursed his battered face in his hands. He was thinking. He was shocked and amazed at Lichtensteiger's strength and brutal ferocity, and he knew that, for the moment, he dare do nothing which might tempt Lichtensteiger to attack him again. Smith was sorely hurt and frightened, but he was not daunted. And deep down in the soul of that undersized bank clerk there smouldered a resolute and desperate determination to have his revenge. Presently he said, "Better now. But it hurts me to move. Bring up the chart from the cabin. I'll find out a quiet place to land you and see what course to steer."

Lichtensteiger laughed. "That's right, my son," said he. "Pity you didn't see a light a bit sooner, and you'd have saved yourself a whole heap of grief." He brought the chart and Smith studied it carefully for some minutes. Then he put his finger on the coast-line between Deal and Ramsgate and said, "There, that looks the best place. It's a stretch of open beach, with no houses shown anywhere near. It looks quiet and deserted enough on the chart. Look for yourself. Will that spot suit you?"

Lichtensteiger looked and grunted. He was no sailor, and that small-scale chart of the southern half of the North Sea did not convey very much to him. He said, "Huh! Guess that'll do. Nothing much doing that way by the look of it. What's this black line running along here?"

"That's a road. I'll put you on the beach here, and you walk inland till you get to the road and then turn left. It's only two miles to Deal that way."

"Let her go, then," said Lichtensteiger. "The sooner you get me ashore the sooner you'll get quit of me, which ought to please you some, I guess. And watch your step! I reckon you know enough now not to try and put anything over on me; but if you feel like playing any tricks—*look out*. If I have to start in on you again, my bucko, I'll tear you up in little bits."

"I'll play no tricks," replied Smith. "How can I? For my own sake, I can't risk you being caught. You're making me do this against my will, but nobody will believe that if they catch me doing it. I promise to do my best to land you where no one will see you. It shouldn't be hard. In four or five hours we'll be close to the land, and you'll see the lights of Ramsgate on one side and Deal on the other. In between there oughtn't to be many lights showing, and we'll run close inshore where it's darkest and anchor. Then I'll row you ashore in the dinghy, and after that it'll be up to you."

"Get on with it, then," said Lichtensteiger, and Smith trimmed the *Kate's* sails to the northerly wind and settled down to steer the compass course he had decided on. The yacht slipped through the darkness with scarcely a sound.

At the end of an hour Lichtensteiger yawned and stretched himself. "Beats me," he said, "how in hell you can tell where you're going to." And Smith said, "It's easy enough, when you know how."

At the end of the second hour Lichtensteiger said, "Gee! This is slow. Deader'n mud. How long now before we get there?" And Smith replied, "About three hours. Why don't you sleep? I'll wake you in time."

Lichtensteiger said, "Nothing doing. Don't you kid yourself! I'm keeping both eyes wide open, constant and regular. I've got 'em on you. Don't forget it, either!"

Another hour went by before Lichtensteiger spoke again. He said, "What's that light in front there? The bright one that keeps on going in and out?"

"Lighthouse," said Smith. "That's the South Foreland light. I'm steering for it. The lights of Deal will show up to the right of it presently, and then we'll pick out a dark patch of coast somewhere to the right of that again and I'll steer in for it."

By 2 a.m. the land was close ahead, a low black line looming against the lesser blackness of the sky. "Looks quiet enough here," said Lichtensteiger. "Just about right for our little job, I reckon. How about it?"

"Right," said Smith, sounding overside with the lead-line. "Four fathoms. We'll anchor here." He ran the *Kate* into the wind, lowered the jib and let go his anchor with a rattle and a splash.

"Cut out that flaming racket!" hissed Lichtensteiger. "Trying to give the show away, are you, or what? You watch your step, damn you!"

"You watch yours," said Smith, drawing the dinghy alongside. "Get in carefully or you'll upset."

"You get in first," replied Lichtensteiger. "Take hold of my two bags and then I'll get in after. And you want to take pains we don't upset. If we do, there'll be a nasty accident—to your neck! I guess I can wring it for you as quick under water as I can here. You watch out now and go slow. You haven't done with me yet, don't you kid yourself."

"No, not yet," said Smith. "I'll put you on shore all right. I'll promise that. It's all I can do under the circumstances; but, considering everything, I think it ought to be enough. Get in now and we'll go."

Smith rowed the dinghy towards the shore. Presently the boat grounded on the sand and Lichtensteiger jumped out. He looked around him for a while and listened intently; but, except for the sound of the little waves breaking and the distant lights of the town, there was nothing to be heard or seen. Then, "All right," said Lichtensteiger. And Smith said nothing. He pushed off from the beach and rowed away silently into the darkness.

Lichtensteiger laughed. He turned and walked inland with a suit-case in each hand. He felt the sand under his feet give way to shingle, the shingle to turf, and the turf to a hard road surface. Lichtensteiger laughed again. It amused him to think that the business of getting himself unnoticed into England should prove, after all, to be so ridiculously easy. He turned to the left and walked rapidly for half a mile before he came to a fork in the road and a signpost. It was too dark for him to see the sign; but he stacked his suit-cases against the post and climbing on them, struck a match. He read: "Calais—1½."

THE END.



'Awright—put it down on the table.

TO OUR
BROTHERS
OVERSEAS

CHRISTMAS
GREETINGS



A DORSET LANDSCAPE FROM BATCOMBE DOWNS

The view looks north-westward towards the Somersetshire border and is entirely typical of the beautiful region in which the picture was taken. The hamlet and church of Batcombe are in the immediate foreground



J. Dixon-Scott, F.R.P.S.

SOLVA, A TINY FISHING PORT ON THE PEMBROKESHIRE COAST

The land which lies on the right-hand side of this little inlet is National Trust property and therefore preserved for the use and pleasure of our people for all time

"The Tatler" goes all over the Empire, and in the past we have been astonished at the popularity and appreciation with which the therefore, although the above have little in common with the winter-time of snow



FOUR
CHARMING
PICTURES
OF THE
MOTHERLAND
YOU LOVE
AND FIGHT
FOR SO WELL

BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER—THE LITTLE WINDRUSH RIVER

This entrancing spot is sometimes called "The Venice of the Cotswolds," and the appellation is perhaps justified because of the number of tiny stone bridges by which the river is spanned



WHERWELL VILLAGE, IN THE TEST VALLEY, HAMPSHIRE

J. Dixon-Scott, F.R.P.S.

The other pictures in this small collection deal with the "Pride of the West," where they claim that you could not photograph a place that is not beautiful, but it will be admitted that less advertised Hampshire has the right to claim that she can hold her own

English countryside scenes so frequently produced in this paper are enjoyed by the inhabitants of our Colonies and Dependencies and and frost, we have no hesitation in including them in our Christmas Number.



Hewitt

"Look, Witherspoon, I DO believe he KNOWS it's you."

NO ONE would have called Edwin Evans a hard worker, and the foreman was long-suffering on the whole; but when he saw the former with a few bricks balanced delicately on his hod, he felt it was time to say something.

"Evans," he said, "why is it you have only half the number of bricks that Williams is carrying?"

Evans looked very hurt. "Indeed to goodness," he said, "it is comparing me with that lazy fellow Williams that you would be? Look you, he is too lazy to make two journeys, whateffer!"

* * *

A theatrical company found themselves playing at a small rural town in the north. Twenty minutes before the curtain was due up, not a soul was in the theatre. The leading man went round to the front and found the theatre manager standing on the steps looking up and down the street.

"Well, where are they?" asked the actor.

"Oh, they'll be along presently," was the reply.

Ten minutes before the show there were five in the audience. Again the actor went round. "Where are they?" he asked.

The manager looked philosophically skywards.

"Oh, they'll be here soon," he said.

Just before the curtain was due to go up, the actor rushed round again, in desperation.

"Where are all the people you said would come and see us?" he gasped.

"What people?" asked the manager. "I'm waiting for my pigeons to come back!"

STORIES FROM EVERYWHERE

An American woman on a brief visit to England found herself somewhat hustled by the number and variety of her engagements.

One day in particular she found difficult, for she had to go first to a funeral and then to a garden-party.

She solved the dress problem by wearing smart but quiet clothes and taking in a hat-box a floral hat which she left in the vestry during the service.

Her sense of quiet pleasure at this successful solution of the problem was somewhat marred, however, when the coffin was brought into the church. For reposing in the centre of the wreaths on the coffin was her flowered hat.

* * *

Not far from the North Pole, a travelling Eskimo salesman knocked at the entrance of an igloo. A brother Eskimo answered.

"Howdy," greeted the salesman. "Would you be interested in an electric fan?"

"Fan?" echoed the second Eskimo. "Why, what would I want with a fan? Do you realise it's fifty below up here?"

The salesman nodded.

"That's true," he admitted. "But you never can tell about this weather. Tomorrow it may jump up to zero!"



L. B. MARTIN

"I got the idea from the stag. Besides, the wife never cooks the head."

Don't be vague
ask for
Haig
NO FINER WHISKY GOES INTO ANY BOTTLE



HAIG in every HOME *for Christmas*



Christmas Greetings

The Directors of McVITIE & PRICE, LTD., have reserved this page in order that they, their Staff and Employees may send Christmas Greetings to their fellow workers who are serving At Home or Overseas in His Majesty's Forces, and to wish them an early and safe return to their homes and loved ones.

McVITIE & PRICE, LTD.

Biscuit Manufacturers,

EDINBURGH • LONDON • MANCHESTER

PARIS • TORONTO

The Squib—(Continued from page 18)

Ella did not number a gift for succinct and concise narration among her virtues, nor Reggie that of unemotional audition. And time was pressing. SchtENCH had returned to his flat and fortified his fury with a couple of drinks, and even now the powerful Rolls-Bentley was lapping up the road to Richmond.

As he beetled over the steering-wheel, his thick lips again and again repeated, like the vow of some cavalier coursing to the fray, the ominous words—"Thirteen Dogswood Mans." And at the same moment Rosie, spurred by the credenda of self-determination, strode homewards to tell Reggie one or two things she had omitted before starting out.

By this time Ella's statement had become involved by the fact that Reggie was moving rapidly round and round the room, causing her to revolve as she spoke, like the hub of a wheel. What policy might have been formulated must remain obscure, for suddenly the sound of the door-bell called a dire halt. Ella clutched the still circumambulating Reggie.

"It's Hugo. He mustn't see me. He'd make another scene. Tell him you're the wrong R."

"But—oh!—Quick!—What am I to do with you?"

Ella solved this for herself by diving behind and below the sofa, which stood a convenient arm's length from the wall.

"I went without my door-key," said Rosie. "What are you doing, with your crossword puzzle all over the floor?"

"I jumped up, thinking it might be someone else, dear."

"Who?"

"I don't know, dear. That's why I jumped up."

Rosie replied with what sounded like "hugh," and seated herself on the sofa. Simultaneously, and so perfectly timed as to sound occasioned by the sit, whirled the door-bell again.

"Who's that? You said you were expecting someone."

"I'm not."

"Reggie! You're keeping something from me."

"Oh, stuff, dear," he replied, as boldly as his apprehension would allow.

"What do you mean, stuff? Stuff what?"

"No, dear. I didn't mean stuff—the verb. I meant stuff—the material."

"What material? What are you talking about?"

"Look out!"

SchtENCH left the diffident maid open-mouthed in the hallway and stood before them, monstrous and very alarming. His heavy brows were knitted; his moustache was shaken by the wind which whistled from his nostrils. He advanced a step, slammed the door with a flick of the hand and spoke through his clenched teeth.

"R. Bumsted?"

Rosie was on her feet, quivering with challenge.

"I am Mrs. Bumsted. Who are you? What do you want?"

SchtENCH recoiled slightly from this unexpected affront. He leered at Reggie.

"Married, eh? That makes it worse."

"Ohh?" queried Rosie, seeming to produce several additional inches of neck. "Makes what worse?"

SchtENCH hesitated, then his wrath flared up again.

"You ask 'im what he's bin doing monkeying around with my girl while I'm away. Though it beats me her wanting anything off a decrepit little fly-weight like 'im."

Not even this implied criticism of her own selection could stay Rosie.

"What girl?" she shrilled.

"Ella Tappett."

Ella Tappett. Rosie had never forgotten that name. The

suspicion kindled a year before had smouldered on. She swung round on Reggie. He stood, holding firmly to the back of a chair, moistening his lips.

The menace of SchtENCH faded completely into the background.

Indeed the anger fell from SchtENCH himself like a shed bathrobe, as he stood gaping with astonishment at the force and venom of Rosie's onslaught.

Vague and very ill-informed were her accusations, but even the more spiteful on this account; for inference poisoned the barbs of her attack. And all the while Reggie remained, chair-gripping, swallowing, stationary beneath the lash.

Rosie paused from sheer exhaustion, and SchtENCH took his opportunity.

"I caime to 'and you a thrashing, but I can't 'and you anything worse than you seem to 'ave got."

Rosie rounded on him and he waited for no more, but pulled off a clumsy and cowering exit. Rosie, reinforced by the brief interval, returned to the assault.

How infectious is anger, and, at times, how inspiring! Suddenly, in the space of a second, a stray spark touched off some hidden arsenal of manhood in Reggie. Bang! And in that moment flew into fragments all his timidity, all his patience, all the crusted creeds of devotion and duty. Words his brain did not seem to devise poured from a tongue he was powerless to control.

"Blast your eyes, you wicked vindictive cow! You take the word of some poisonous SchtENCH about me, after all the years of slavery I've put up with from you, you hideous scraggy-necked old crow! All right then—you shall get what's coming to you. Come out of that, Ella Tappett, and the worse she thinks the better I shall be damn well delighted."

Rosie staggered backwards, groped for, and unfortunately just made contact with, a chair into which to collapse. Ella, springing from the floor, found herself in the arms of Richard, who shook off the no longer diffident maid in the hall, and hurried into the midst of this rampant moment. Even as he burst into the room, Reggie burst out. He clapped his bowler hat resoundingly on his head and disappeared into space.

Oh, that we might leave him there, his emancipation confirmed, his immunity complete. Oh, that we might hail him

champion liberator of the countless generations of the hen-pecked host, bursting the shackles of tradition which have bound them in their age-long prison of ridicule. But would he have been the happier? Anyhow, what actually occurred was this.

After two hours he returned, his nerves still vibrating in strange unwonted spasms. He discovered Rosie lying prone in bed, her eyes tightly closed, a bottle of smelling-salts clasped in her hand. Reggie caught his breath.

"Rosie! Are you ill?"

She made no sign. Heavens! Was she dead from shock? He bent over the foot of the bed, scrutinizing her anxiously.

"Rosie, speak to me! I know you've heard the whole story now, but I won't recriminate. I forgive you fully. I want things to be just as they were before between us. Rosie, don't you want the same? Oh, Rosie, don't you?"

Rosie very deliberately stirred and sat up. Then the bottle of smelling-salts whizzed past his ear and smashed the looking-glass panel of the wardrobe into a thousand pieces.

"You do, then!" he cried triumphantly. "Oh, thank you, dear Rosie, thank you."

Well, well! Perhaps, after all, Mother Nature knows best.



Slalom des champions amoureux

THE BRIDGE

By DOUGLAS NEWTON

THE woman crouched in the bay of the bridge where the toll-house was set. She sat on the broad wooden seat against the pillars of the parapet from which the checkered pole was usually worked; though it was up now, hindering no man.

She sat as still as a graven thing; her eyes, curiously dead, fixed upon rather than watching the fugitives as they passed.

The terrible torrent had thinned to a more terrible trickle. Now only the old and the halt were coming over, groaning and shuffling in an awful exhaustion beneath the strange and pitiful bundles that were all that was left of their homes. Only occasionally a squealing cart drawn sometimes by horses, sometimes by crazy teams in which oxen and donkeys were mingled, rattled frantically across. The drivers looked back over the amazing jumble of goods they were trying to rescue, to the far distant bank they had left. There was a sort of incredulous terror in their faces.

On that distant bank great spoutings of flame, earth, and smoke kept leaping up here and there like foul and eccentric fountains. They moved steadily closer across the plain as the enemy artillery lengthened its range, yet no shells fell on the bridge. The woman knew they would not. Jan had told her so. This bridge across the wide and dangerous river was too vital to the enemy's plan of surprise.

The tragic shufflings of the fugitives strove to quicken as the explosions grew louder and nearer. The woman was almost inclined to shout to them to tell them that they would not be harmed. But that would be betraying Jan. Also, the strange, iron grip on her throat and her soul, held her against all speech.

Presently those on the bridge did break into frantic running as a waspish rattle of machine-gun fire rose up behind them. In a panic-flash even that long bridge was empty, leaving her unstirring and still staring along its narrow canyon.

She was a short, strong woman of about twenty-five, with the big bones, and broad and heavy features of a peasant. Uncouth, she yet had a powerful comeliness, like a country-woman painted by Millet. Her eyes so still and set under the straight buttress of her brows and the squareness of her firm lips, gave her a classic sombreness. She might have been the female symbol of her race, brooding over a broken Poland.

About her were her own bedding bundles and bits of bags. They were not grimed, like the others, with the dust of the plains. They had something of the poor neatness of the little toll-house against which they stood: her home. They were ready, though they might not be needed for flight: Jan, her husband, had told her that it would not be necessary for them.

The shelling on the far bank stopped. It was replaced by the more infernal uproar of mechanized units hurtling into action. The machine-gun and rifle fire scaled up to an almost hysterical scream while the far end of the bridge became hazed with dust. This rose as though the ground was on fire drifting about like sluggish smoke. Slashes of flame and whirling movements tore and twisted the clouds this way and that. It was like a dream of Hades.

The woman stiffened a little. Her eyes, which had turned to the far end of the bridge, took on a wary intentness. Her hands, hidden under her skirts, dug deeper into the voluminous masses of her petticoats. Her lips moved a little. Perhaps it was a rosary she held concealed from sight, and she was praying.

The dust haze swirled and tore apart as though in a vortex. Out of it leapt bunching men and horses—Polish cavalry tearing across the bridge.

They came across leaping and stretching like things of india-rubber, heads low, men's faces dough-white and strained under their streaking grime. Flashes of magnesium flared in the air above them. Billows of smoke, soft and lovely as carded wool, appeared magically from the very air, but under them men and horses crashed to the stone setts of the bridge as though smashed down by giant hammers.

But it was only shrapnel the enemy fired, not high-explosive

shells. Jan had been right. The enemy dare not risk damaging the structure.

Now the high, wire-in-the-wind screaming of machine-gun bullets rose to an unbearable pitch as the cavalry approached and passed the woman. Under it even she crouched closer to the parapet. The horsemen went by in thunder and were gone; swinging into the dip that would keep them covered from the shell and automatic fire across the river. The shrapnel bursts went after them, feeling out and reaching for them like the wavering fingers of a blind giant.

A minute later the four light tanks that had been covering the Polish rear came across the bridge. They were already battered and limping, and their clanging uproar made them sound like wounded dragons. The first and the third were mounted with machine guns that blazed away at the far bank. The machine gun of the second tilted drunkenly against the sky. The turret was crumpled and twisted and the whole machine had a half-slaughtered look, like a beast still able to crawl to safety, and no more.

The last tank was slightly heavier, and was armed with a light cannon as well as machine guns. It came back across the bridge with a greater deliberation, firing almost with a conscious composure into the swirling haze behind it. Though the other tanks rattled on and out of sight into the dip, this one slowed and came to a halt by the toll-house.

The sudden stopping of sound made a silence that was almost painful after so much uproar. This, or the halting of the tank disturbed the woman. She rose, though her hands remained concealed in her skirts as the manhole at the top of the tank fell back with a clang and two men thrust out their heads. Both were officers, one a captain, the other a lieutenant.

They did not look at the woman, but back along the bridge studying the farther bank with narrowed eyes. The noise within the tank had given them the habit of shouting, so that when they spoke the woman heard all they said.

"Coming up fast," the captain decided. "They'll be on the bridge in ten minutes."

"And nothing to stop them—not even a tank gun within fifteen miles," the lieutenant cried. "They have the devil's own luck."

"Luck!" the captain jeered bitterly. "No luck about them—they *knew*. That's plain from the way they were led here."

"Led—that means treachery?"

"That—or the gratitude of one of our German minority."

"There were none in this district."

"They were everywhere . . . if not recognizable as Germans until moments like this."

"In other words, spies?"

"It is a form of patriotism at which they excel," the captain shrugged. "Don't belittle it. If our Poles had the same grim devotion we would be better off."

"It's wicked, all the same. In ten minutes their heavy tanks will be across this bridge, sweeping up our outposts, shooting up our villages and catching our defences in the flank. It means massacre."

"We can, at least, get warning ahead of them."

"We should be able to stop them." The lieutenant shouted. "Why aren't there engineers here to blow up this bridge? If we only had dynamite—ourselves—"

"Don't worry—that has already been considered—and arranged. This bridge is mined. The toll-house keeper has his instructions . . ." the captain turned to look at the toll-house, but frowned when he saw only a woman there. "Where is the man?" he bellowed. "Where is Marek Portoki? He should be here, ready to act."

"It is all right," the woman answered stiffly. "I am Anna his daughter. My father is sick and in the hospital at Gorale. But I—my husband and I know what to do. The bridge will be destroyed."

"Your husband—where is he?" the captain snapped.

"He is at work on the business now," she said with a touch

(Continued on page iv)

SUGGESTIONS FOR CHRISTMAS GIFTS

BY Asprey of BOND STREET

A copy of the Christmas Catalogue from which these gifts have been selected, will be gladly sent on request.



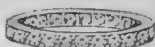
PLATINUM BROOCH
SET BRILLIANT CUT DIAMONDS
41.0.0



GOLD & ENAMEL
REGIMENTAL
BROOCH
4.15.0



STEEL &
LEATHER COVERED
CLIP WATCH
4.7.6



DIAMOND
ETERNITY RING
13.5.0



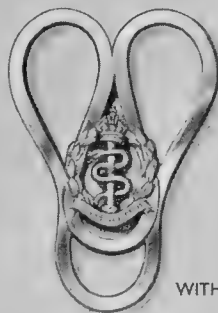
SAPPHIRE & DIAMOND
ETERNITY RING
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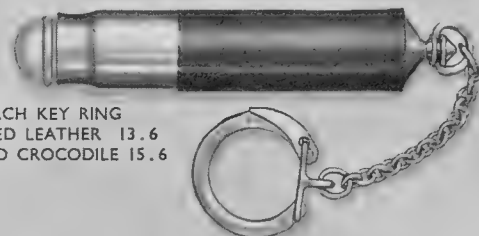
RUBY & DIAMOND
ETERNITY RING
22.10.0

GOLD CLIP
SET SAPPHIRES & DIAMONDS
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REGIMENTAL BADGE BROOCHES FROM 3.0.0



MONEY CLIP
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GOLD 3.15.0
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SILVER HORSESHOE &
REGIMENTAL BADGE
KEY RING 13.6
(Any badge)

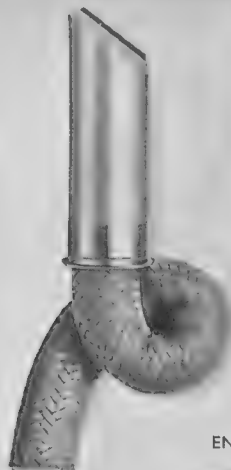


SILVER
ST. CHRISTOPHER
IDENTITY BRACELET
17.6
(Engraving extra)

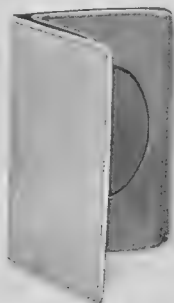
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Sightsize	
P.C.	1.12.6
7" x 5"	2.5.0
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HANDMADE SILVER
TINDER LIGHTER
PLAIN 1.7.6
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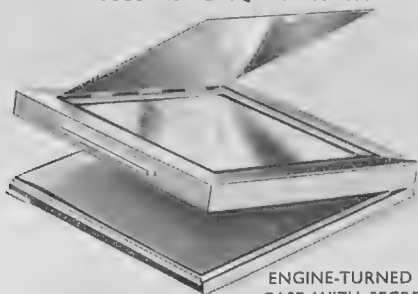
PIGSKIN NOTEFOLD
FOR THE TUNIC POCKET
WITH PHOTO SPACE
2.0.0



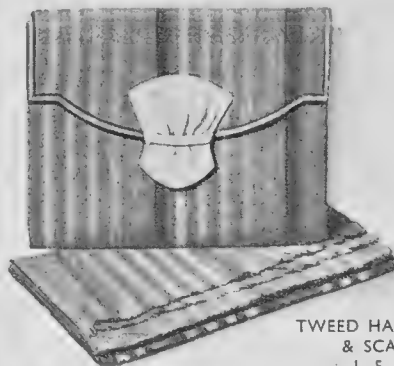
PIGSKIN
TRAVELLING CLOCK—
8-DAY WITH ALARM
4.0.0



SILVER FLAPJACK MOUNTED WITH
REGIMENTAL BADGE 1.12.6
COLOURED LACQUER DO. 10.6



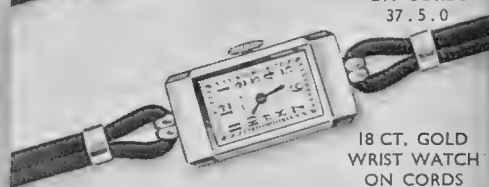
ENGINE-TURNED VANITY
CASE WITH SECRET SPACE
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The Bridge—(Continued from page ii)

of anxiety. "But have no fear, sir, it will be done as ordered. My father trained us both in the way to do it. There will be no mistake."

"But this is vital in its importance. If anything happens to your husband, you a woman——"

"I am a Pole, captain," she said looking straight into his eyes. "I know what to do. I will not fail my country."

For a moment they measured each other, the woman a little anxious, the captain's eyes narrowing on that still, strong face set in so strange and sombre a resolve. The lieutenant said sharply:

"There is their first tank, heading for the bridge."

The captain turned quickly, frowned, stared back at the woman.

"As a Pole—I trust you," he said. He saluted her and ducked inside his machine. "There is nothing else," he told his lieutenant. "We are helpless." The roaring of their machinery drowned all other words as they lurched off the bridge.

Anna sat down again, her hands gripping convulsively on what they held beneath her skirt. She saw along the river bank the first of the German heavy tanks heaving and lurching towards the bridge. Like a trail of prehistoric monsters in line half-a-dozen of the ugly juggernauts followed—heading inexorably to crush the resistance out of her country, her people.

Her country, her people! In spite of what Jan said *she* still considered them to be that. Marriage could not alter her heart or her soul. She was still and always would be a Pole, even if the law held her to be German.

She stretched out her foot, lifted with her toe the counter-weight at the end of the barrier arm. The checkered pole sank slowly blocking the road. That was an arrangement Jan had made. If she had serious information of what was ahead, she was to drop the pole as a signal for him to stop and collect her news.

Jan, her husband, was coming towards her now, perhaps in the first of those tanks he had led so cleverly to this bridge.

Her husband, Jan Klaczlo—who was not Jan Klaczlo, but Jan Uhlm; one of the German minority, only, as the captain had said, he had not revealed that until this moment, no, not even to her.

As Jan Klaczlo he had seemed so utterly Polish in tongue as well as habits, that she had never even doubted him, until a day ago. He had come into her life more than a year since, wooed and won her. She had loved him thinking him a Pole. That was one reason why he was so wrong in saying that marrying him had changed her. She had never thought of him—or herself as anything but Polish. Just marrying him, just one day of knowledge could not make her German even though he was so sure it did.

But then being German seemed to him to count more than anything. Perhaps he did love her as he said, but he loved these people he was leading against Poland so much more, that he seemed to think that even she must surrender everything to it.

"You are one of us now, Anna," he had said. "Marrying me makes you the same as me. You are a German. It is the law of the world. Marrying a man makes a woman the same race as her husband—any lawyer will tell you that. Yes, you are now a German, and like me you must be a good German."

Perhaps she was heavy and stupid, as he held all Poles to be. Perhaps Jan's being so quick and clever, so full of wonderful thoughts about the greatness of his people, so overwhelming in talk, had dazed her. She hadn't been able to make him understand that she hadn't changed. That she still felt a Pole. That she simply couldn't be anything but a Pole.

Perhaps all Germans were like that. They were so sharp and wonderful, so sure of themselves that they took it for granted that all other peoples couldn't help admiring them, *had* to bow down before them.

Jan had always been clever. She, at least, could see that, and brave and devoted, too. Because he had lived so long in Poland, spoke and behaved like a Pole, he had been chosen by his great leader for a special mission. He had been given the secret task of securing this bridge for the day when Hitler struck.

He had come to the district solely for that reason, had won the friendship and trust of her father entirely for this end.

He had been strangely frank and exultant even about that—being so sure of her, of course, since she was his wife and a German now. He had told her with this odd candour—which would have meant shame for a Pole—that even falling in love with her was part of his noble devotion to his leader. The

sacredness of his cause and the fire of his passion seemed to blend in his mind like a fore-ordained destiny.

Winning her, marrying her had satisfied all his aims in one. It had given him love. It had completed the trust her father had felt in him. So in this way he had been able to serve his country better than he had dreamed, for he had been taken to live in the toll-house, even guaranteed by her father as a reliable assistant.

In his exultance he had been unable to hide his triumph from her. He, the German, had planned brilliantly, as only the brilliant Germans could. He had obtained the complete confidence of her and her father. He had been shown all the secrets of the explosive charges hidden under every arch of the bridge, with the wiring and detonative system that would blow them up at the single pressure of an electric switch. Her old father, who was so sick, had been even glad to tell him. If anything happened, if his health broke down, there would be this Jan Klaczlo, his own son-in-law, to do the work that would protect Poland.

Jan had laughed as he told how thoroughly he had deceived the old man. He laughed even more as he explained how cunningly he had got the toll-keeper out of the way. He had used her father's ill-health. When word was sent to him from Germany that the invasion of Poland was to begin he had just put a little something into Marek Portoki's drink. It had been quite harmless, but it had increased the old man's stomach pains so much that he thought he was gravely ill, and so the doctor had easily persuaded him to go to the hospital at Gorale.

With Marek Portoki out of the way the bridge was safe. Jan had cut the electric wires that alone could cause the explosion, just near the switch. All he had to do then was to hurry to the frontier and from there lead the German tanks to this bridge, from which they could get behind the Polish defences, smash all resistance. . . .

And that was what he had done. He had gone off leaving her alone, but quite sure that everything would be all right. He had had no fears about her. He was quite sure that she was not only convinced but *glad* that she was a German—a member of the mightiest race in the world. He was quite sure that he had left her dazzled and eager for the honours and wealth that would come to them from serving his country this way. And, of course, he had been careful, too. He had cut the electric wires leading to the mines under the bridge, and was quite sure that their repair was beyond a woman's skill.

He was wrong over that as he had been wrong in thinking he had made her a German by love, marriage and persuasion. Her father's sense of responsibility over the bridge had always been so very great that he had instructed her against all eventualities. Thus even she, a woman, knew just what to do if the wires were cut.

Yes, she knew what to do, just as her loyalty to her country told her what she must do. That was why she now sat waiting for the German tanks to come up to her, bringing Jan. She had to explain to Jan. It seemed treachery not to let him know that he had made a mistake in thinking her a German.

The monsters were on the bridge by this time, coming forward in a grinding roar that made her dizzy. Tank after tank began to cross until all were in line, the bridge echoing and shaking with their mighty passage.

They came swiftly at first, then slowed as they saw the pole barring their road. That relieved her. It meant that Jan was, as he promised to be, in the first tank, and had warned the driver that there might be danger in charging right through.

Indeed, Jan thrust his head out of the iron door at the side, as the first mammoth ground to a halt, holding the whole line after it. He saw her, wriggled out to the road, came across to her.

"What is it Anna?" he shouted, "is there anything wrong ahead?"

"Not ahead," she told him in a flat, dead voice. "But—but you made mistakes about two things. I am *not* a German. I am a Pole. I will never be anything else. I will even die as a Pole should——"

"Anna! Are you mad . . ." he gaped.

"The other thing is that you are wrong in thinking I can't blow up this bridge. My father showed me how, even if the wires were cut. I just have to bring the two cut ends together——"

"Wires? Where——?"

"They're in my hands now—under my dress. I love you Jan . . . but I am a Pole . . . I *am* . . ."

Her hands came together beneath her skirts. There was a gigantic roar as the charges under the arches of the bridge blew up simultaneously. Anna and Jan were blotted out by that explosion. But so was the bridge and every tank on it.



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A Dream of Old China

(Continued from page 45)

Even Chen, with his innocent childish mind could see what had happened. She had held his purse in her hand, he had gone far away in his dreams; he remembered she had had to shake his arm to bring him back to earth. Then she had calmly handed him back the purse, empty.

"The bitch!" shrieked Hutch. "And you didn't notice it was empty! Man, you're mad! But you know where she lives. We'll go there and break her neck and get the money back. If she's gone already we'll get the police. She's stolen your money, the bitch!"

Hutch was sobbing with rage. Dragging his crippled body about the room, knocking into chairs and table, his livid face twisting, his eyes blazing, he was like a demon escaped from the gates of hell.

To Chen it seemed that he was living through a century of pain and horror more bitter than any he had ever known. As he sat there, staring, the cherry blossom grew fainter and fainter, until at last only a few stray petals fell sadly, like cold unhappy snowflakes. Then, for the first time in his life, they fell no more, and Chen saw himself surrounded by brown withered petals, and gaunt bare trees; the golden hill turned into a black cloud; the gentle river was gone; no birds sang. He saw in all its ugliness the dirty twisted streets, never still, never free from screams and filth and violence. He knew that he would always see it now; never again would the showers of blossom blot out the squalor, and hide the vicious faces of the drunken men and women.

"Come on, man!" screamed Hutch. "Don't lose a minute, or we may be too late," and he hobbled up to the door, dragging at Chen's limp arm. Chen followed him, still in a daze. Perhaps, after all, there might be a chance. . . . Then, with his hand on the door, he stopped.

"She shall have my money. She was kind to me. The only person who has ever been kind to me. She gave me tea in a little cup—"

"You're mad! Mad! You're not going to sit still and let a bloody prostitute get away with the money it has taken you all your life to save. You've eaten less than a fly for years, and only kept alive because you've fed on dreams. Do you want to live in these filthy streets until you die, sweating in the laundry, listening to the jeers and taunts of those louts outside? You will never go to China, and that's the only thing you've wanted all your life."

Chen heard the voice raging at him, but the words passed him by. The cherry blossom had stopped falling, for ever, but there rose before his misty eyes a face as pink as petals, with billowing hair as golden as the sunlight on the hills.

Chen's tortured face fell back into the old gentle lines.

"She was beautiful," he murmured softly.

THE END

Our Advertisers' Announcements

It may come as a surprise to many of our readers that this Christmas Number was planned in summer days. Some sections were already on the press by the first week in September, and therefore, whilst every effort was made to insert all corrections and changes up to and including the time of closing for press, readers are asked to recognize that in the intervening weeks circumstances may have arisen which might affect prices, and other details relating to our advertisers' merchandise.

GLOAG'S WHISKY

We have been asked to state that Messrs. Matthew Gloag's advertisement which appears on page 51 was prepared in July of this year.

Postal Rates for this "Tatler" Christmas Number

England and Abroad 4d.
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For Hair Health and Well Groomed Appearance

Nufix is made from a base of pure natural vegetable oils, proved and tested by analyses for purity and hair-growing properties. The valuable vegetable oils, by absorption, nourish the hair roots and prevent scurf and dandruff resulting from a dry and clogged scalp.

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Carry on, Christmas!

We have based our present plans at Austin Reed's on two reasonably safe assumptions—the first, that Christmas is still Christmas; the second, that men still expect to be made a fuss of. In other words, we have completed all our usual preparations to help you in every possible way we can.

If you will call in, you will find a really exhilarating array of presents, all chosen by experts at knowing what men like to find in a parcel. If you are unable to call, please write to Austin Reed, Ltd., 103-113 Regent Street, London, W.1, for our Christmas booklet. This contains well over a hundred inspirations, and with its help you can polish off your masculine shopping in an arm-chair by the fire. Then, when you have chosen, we will, if you wish, dispatch your presents direct to any addresses in the Kingdom, with any enclosure you care to send, or with an appropriate message of greeting.

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Drambuie

The Drambuie Liqueur Co. Ltd., Edinburgh.

The Fixer-Upper—(Continued from page 58)

with pride, his eyes flashing with triumph, "Think THAT over. That was living, boy. Africa, my youth! Fighting something, and winning through. D'you hear?"

"Do what?" Harry said. "Sorry, Mr. Wallington, I was dreaming. What were you saying then?"

Albert wore deathly pale, and the hand which clutched at his damp forehead was shaking. "What . . . was . . . I . . . saying? You—you mean, you didn't hear?"

"Must be interesting, living in India," Harry said, nodding brightly. "I should think you must have had some amazing experiences."

Albert stood up. He was shaken to the centre of his being. "India! Experiences! Interesting!" he muttered dazedly. He turned to Mr. Noakes and shook his head. "Going to bed, Arthur," he muttered. "Very tired."

He ignored Harry's cheerful valediction, and walked heavily to the door, slamming it behind him as he went out.

Mr. Noakes looked at Harry and smiled. "That struck a very low note, anyway," he said. "Very instructive, my boy." He stood up. "Think I'll go to bed, too. See you in the morning, Harry. Good night." He winked heavily as he turned away.

"Do what, sir? Oh, yes, Good night, Mr. Noakes," Harry said, "Interesting evening, eh? Something wrong with your eye?"

At breakfast time Albert and Mary Wallison did not appear to eat with the others. They had come down early, for just a few moments to say they were packing their things. They would liked to have stayed, they told Mrs. Noakes coldly, but circumstances made that impossible. Albert had done hardly any of the talking. He seemed to be very low in spirits altogether. But about going he was as adamant as his memsahib. They felt, etc., they had decided, etc., and now they were going; it was final.

So they left at midday, accompanied as far as the station by Mr. Noakes. And Mr. Noakes, walking home afterwards, his pipe going well, smiling at the sunshine, felt like a man released from prison. Life stretched ahead, Albertless, beautiful and unimpaired.

He strolled indoors, and the house was fragrant with the cooking of the lunch. Harry and Jim were in the dining-room already, lounging in the window.

"Well, that's that," Mr. Noakes said cheerfully. "Ah, Harry, my boy. Most amusing—if a little brutal."

"Do what, sir?" Harry said.

"I said 'most amusing,'" Mr. Noakes answered more clearly, "Just a reference to an arrangement made between Jim and myself." He smiled knowingly at Jim, who grimaced awkwardly.

"I say, didn't you wear that same shirt yesterday?" Harry said suddenly. "That's pretty unhygienic, you know."

Mr. Noakes reddened. "What did you say?"

"All you retired chaps are alike," Harry said. "Get sloppy. Eat, drink, sleep, potter about on golf links. All get sloppy. You want to watch it, Mr. Noakes."

There was a long pause, during which Jim sidled out of the room. The look he gave his father indicated that the matter was out of his hands now, and uncontrollable.

"Now listen to me, Harry my boy," Mr. Noakes said firmly. "It's over now. There's no need for any more 'fixer-upping.' It's finished. So stop it."

"So old Wallington's buzzed off, has he?" Harry said, interrupting. He flicked some cigarette ash on to the carpet and rubbed it in with his foot. "Ver-y funny. Ver-y funny, indeeda!"

Mr. Noakes laughed queerly. "Yes, it was your saying that your parents had gone away and that you had to stay here until they got back that did the trick. You ingenious young devil!"

Harry stared. "Ingenious? But it was true. Didn't Jim tell you? I'll be here quite a time. Cheer up, sir," he went on. "You've no idea how much I'll liven up the old place!" He strolled across and gave Mr. Noakes an appallingly hearty slap on the back, and laughed like a steam whistle.

Mr. Noakes fell, coughing, into a chair. "You mean you'll be staying here a long time?" he said desperately. "Then please remember that I will stand no more of this deplorable back-slapping and your distorted forms of humour and your damnable——"

Harry paused in the doorway, a surprised look on his face.

"Do what, sir?" he said. "Do what? Eh? Speak up."

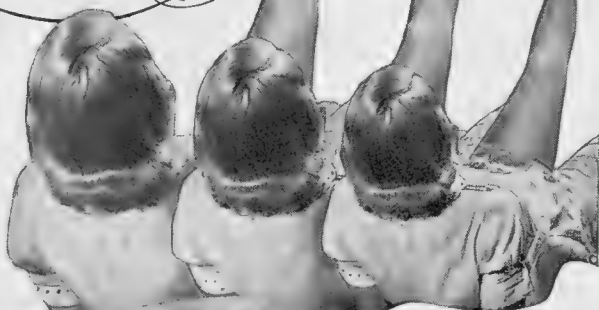
THE END

* * *

The attention of our readers is kindly requested to the Christmas appeals for various deserving causes on pages *f* and *g* in this issue. At no time more so than at the present, are the hospitals and homes for such institutions as Dr. Barnardo's and the National Institute for the Blind in greater need of the support of all of us, for the circumstances of this moment are very special ones. It is hoped therefore that all these appeals for an assistance which surely is their just due, will not pass unheeded. The need is indeed an urgent one.

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the aid of which many would have to retire from active life. Call for a free consultation or write for literature. Hours 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. If in doubt, call with your doctor.

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A large number of the informative diagrammatic drawings, chiefly by that well-known artist Mr. G. H. Davis, which have been published from time to time in THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS are now available in collected form in a special 32-page publication entitled "INSIDE KNOWLEDGE." This will appeal to all who want to know the inner workings of things which the majority of us see only from the outside. Many of these interesting sectional drawings are reproduced as panoramas, each measuring over three feet wide. Included among them are a submarine, a destroyer, a cruiser, an aircraft carrier and a battleship.

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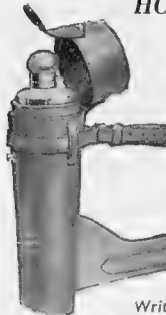
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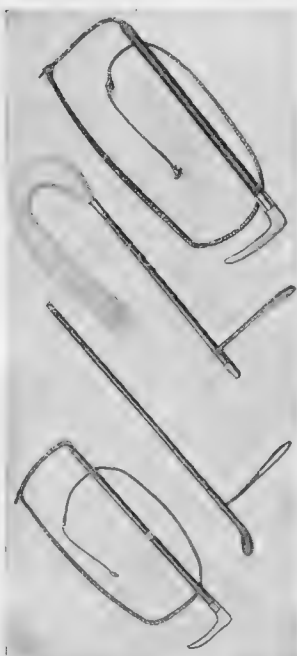
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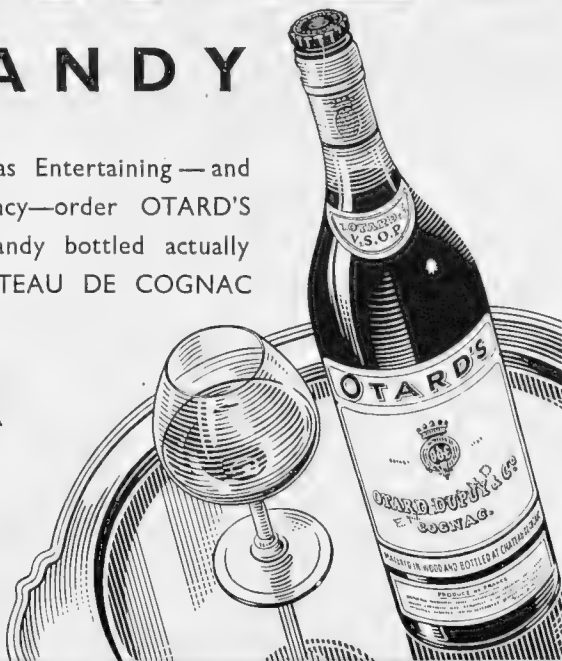
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Confessions of a Coiffeur



... and my practised eye watched her hair as she ran the comb through it with a beautifully jewelled hand.

"That is charming of you," Monsieur Georges," she replied; "my husband said the same thing when we were married last year, but not so nicely, although he is a diplomat." When I left the cubicle I called the assistant who had been attending her.

"Henri," I said, "if ever that lady wants a *postiche*, remember that we make the best in the world—and give her one better! Give her——"

"But, Monsieur," Henri interrupted, "we made her one three years ago. She is wearing it now!"

And it was so. My creation, "*La Naturelle*," had given this lady hair as beautiful and as charming as her character and as young as her heart. Like so many others, she had used my *Times* system of payment by instalments and the addresses from which her cheques had come showed that my transformation had beguiled people in the capitals of Europe. It had become so much a living part of her that it had deceived even me!

* * *

In my office there was a letter addressed in a feminine hand: *Monsieur Georges Barranger, Maison Georges, 38 & 40 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.*

I deal with all letters. Mine is a position of confidence. Inside was a formal request for my brochure. I sent one to the unknown lady.

Maybe, I think, her hair has never responded and expressed her personality. Maybe she has heard my saying that a woman without a distinctive coiffure is like a rose without perfume. She wants, possibly, one of the modern Edwardian styles or wishes, perhaps, to remain young for her children. Whatever the reason, I know that my brochure is a passport to romance.



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500 Guineas creates a pension which can be named after the donor, a most suitable method of perpetrating a name or a memory

Contributions gratefully received and further information gladly given by the Secretary

CHRISTMAS COMES

The Cancer Research Fund.

The Imperial Cancer Research Fund is continuing unabated the investigation of the causes and possibilities of curing this dread disease which it has been conducting since the beginning of the century. Already much has been done to rid the nation of this scourge, and with the new laboratories recently built, the search for knowledge which will indeed be of the highest benefit to man is intensified. The fund is appealing this Christmas particularly that it shall be remembered by legacies from well-wishers, and a form of bequest will be found on this page.

Governesses' Benevolent Institution.

Although the war has as yet lasted but a few months the Governesses' Benevolent Institution of 58 Victoria Street, S.W.1, have found that already two definite results are showing themselves. First, it has produced a sudden and serious increase in the distress among governesses. In a number of cases they have lost their posts through children having been taken away to relatives or other houses where the parents find it impossible also to take their governesses. Governesses also who earned their living by conducting small classes or schools found their whole livelihood suddenly liquidated. There are, of course, other cases of distress which arise directly from the war.

Secondly there has been a marked slowing up of the intake of new money, and this, at a time when more service is being demanded of the G.B.I., is a very serious matter. Any donations will, therefore, be most gratefully received by the Institution at 58 Victoria Street, S.W.1.

The Royal Cancer Hospital (Free).

War between nations takes a heavy toll of life and resources—for this reason alone the other war being waged at home against cancer must be pursued unrelentingly.

The Royal Cancer Hospital must be victorious in its fight against this dread disease. Although a number of organizations have decided to suspend activities, the work of treatment and research at The Royal Cancer Hospital will continue unabated throughout the war.

During the difficult times ahead, please spare a thought and practical help for this great struggle. Last year alone there were 74,000 deaths from cancer. Thousands of pounds have to be spent yearly to prevent this frightening number from increasing. Now—more than ever, the hospital needs money to carry on. Please send a gift, however small, to keep the good work going, to The Royal Cancer Hospital (Free), Fulham Road, London, S.W.3.

The Distressed Gentlefolks' Aid Association.

This association was formed for the relief of gentlepeople, who, owing to various causes, are in deep distress, and in many cases on the verge of starvation. The association makes weekly grants to 360 of its necessitous cases and also supplies clothing, blankets, invalid comforts and makes special allowances to others who are in great distress. Unfortunately, the



IN THE COUNTRY NOW

Dr. Barnardo's children have, of course, taken part in the general exodus of the young from London to safe country areas, and here are three of them enjoying the freedom of their new home

Imperial Cancer Research Fund

Patron—HIS MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY THE KING.

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Director—DR. W. E. GYE

Founded in 1902, under the direction of the Royal College of Physicians of London and the Royal College of Surgeons of England as a centre for research and information on cancer, the Imperial Cancer Research Fund is working unceasingly on the systematic investigation of the disease in man and animals. The work of this fund and of other great centres of research has increased our knowledge of the origin and nature of cancer and has so altered our outlook that the disease is now curable in increasing numbers.

Our previous accommodation has become too limited and we have recently built new modern laboratories to extend the scope of our investigations. The income from investments and the Endowment Fund is insufficient to cover the total annual expenditure, and help is urgently needed to meet the heavy additional cost of expansion.

Donations, Subscriptions and Legacies are required and may be sent to the Honorary Treasurer, c/o Royal College of Surgeons of England, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.2, or may be paid to the Westminster Bank, Limited, Marylebone Branch, 1 Stratford Place, London, W.1, A/c Imperial Cancer Research Fund.

BUT ONCE A YEAR

number of appeals from poor souls in urgent need of assistance has increased while the funds available are reduced on account of the war. The association appeals for help, that assistance and perhaps a little comfort may be given to more of the many who have found poverty and sadness in their old age. Donations will be gratefully received at 74 Brook Green, London, W.6.

John Groom's Crippleage.

At Edgware Way there are 208 crippled girls in training, in employment and living in their village containing splendid workrooms, showroom, hospital, church and well-managed homes. The Clerkenwell branch being in the danger zone, a larger number of the crippled workers have been removed to Clacton, where workrooms have been opened; this has proved a costly but necessary move. The provision of an air-raid shelter at Edgware has entailed an expenditure of £750.

In addition to the unique scope of this Christian enterprise, there is the John Groom's Orphanage at Clacton-on-Sea, where nearly 200 girls are maintained, including babies, up to fifteen years of age.

Economy is the watchword but without meanness. Many cripples are waiting for admission. Otherwise unemployable cripples are turned into happy, self-respecting and self-helping individuals. It is impossible to give in words an adequate picture of the happiness of the girls at work, and the wonder of the artificial flowers must be seen to be believed.

Donations should be sent to John Groom's Crippleage and Flower-Girls' Mission, 37 Sekforde Street, Clerkenwell, London, E.C.1.

Dr. Barnardo's Homes.

Although we are still compelled cheerfully to suffer all the inconveniences of blackouts, and shall have to curtail many of our Christmas festivities, we must not overlook the need of those in greater want than ourselves, and for this reason we are calling attention to the Christmas-time needs of Dr. Barnardo's family of 8,250 necessitous children.

Since the outbreak of war Dr. Barnardo's Homes have been faced with a continual stream of unexpected expenses. Food prices are higher, warm clothing and stouter boots are costing more than hitherto, and the Homes are finding it difficult to make ends meet; yet despite these additional burdens the homes still continue to admit an average of five children every day under their charter "No destitute child ever refused admission." Sympathizers with this work will undoubtedly find some way to translate compassion into practical endeavour, and any gift which you may be led to give should be sent to 330 Barnardo House, Stepney Causeway, London, E.1. Cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to Dr. Barnardo's Homes.

The Shaftesbury Homes and "Arethusa" Training Ship.

The history of this society is well known. Since it was founded in 1843, 34,537 poor British boys and girls from all parts of the United Kingdom have passed through. Each child has been given an individual chance, and the qualities of the child have been brought out rather than the quantities admitted. Apart from boys being trained for civil employment, boys are trained for a life at sea and enter the Royal Navy or Merchant Navy. During the Great War in the attack on Zeebrugge, one old *Arethusa* boy was awarded the V.C., while seven others were awarded the D.S.M. The society regularly receives letters of appreciation from Old Boys, saying that they owe their present positions to the early life spent on board the *Arethusa*. Boys, most of whom are the sons of soldiers, are also trained for entry into Army bands. That Army bands continually apply for boys from the Newport Market Army Bands School, which is the branch of the society that trains these boys, is proof of the quality of their training. Girls in the society's homes are trained for domestic service, so that should they take up work other than domestic they have an insight to those qualities that go to make home life happy. Needless to say, evacuation and A.R.P. has been a very heavy expense, especially as funds have been falling off. Donations and legacies are most urgently needed to help the society carry on its great "National Service" of constantly maintaining and training 1,165 poor children, and will be gratefully acknowledged from the Headquarters at 164 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.C.2.

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CHRISTMAS GIFTS

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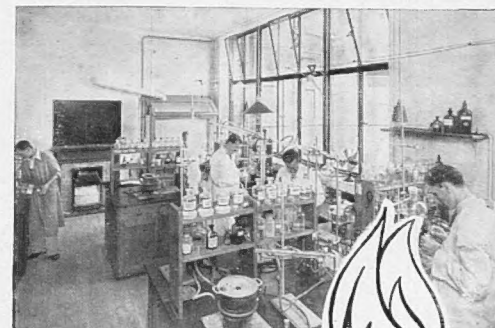
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The Royal Cancer Hospital

(FREE)

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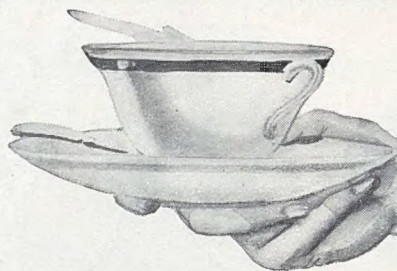
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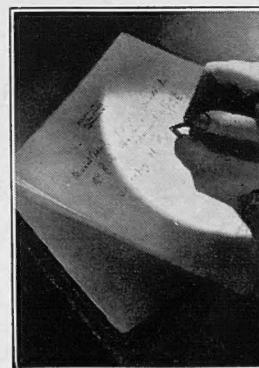
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"None better, Brother Ned."

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